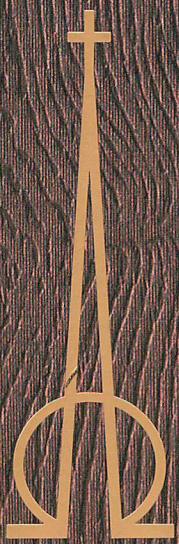
The Creation of Heaven & Earth

The Advocate Manhee Lee



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In the beginning God created
the heavens and the earth.
2Now the earth was without shape
and empty, and darkness was over
the surface of the watery deep, but
the Spirit of God was moving over
the surface of the water. 3God said,
"Let there be light." And there was
light! 4God saw that the light was
good, so God separated the light from
the darkness. 5God called the light
"day" and the darkness "night." There
was evening, and there was morning,
marking the first day. (Gn 1:1-5)

THE CREATION OF HEAVEN AND EARTH

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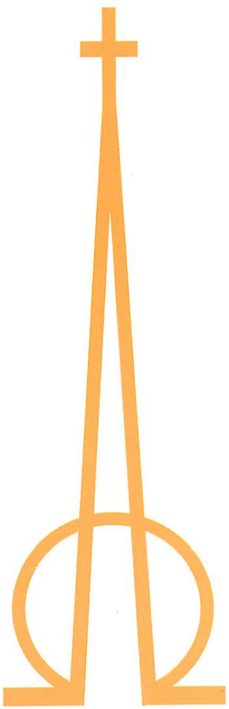
Advocate—Manhee Lee



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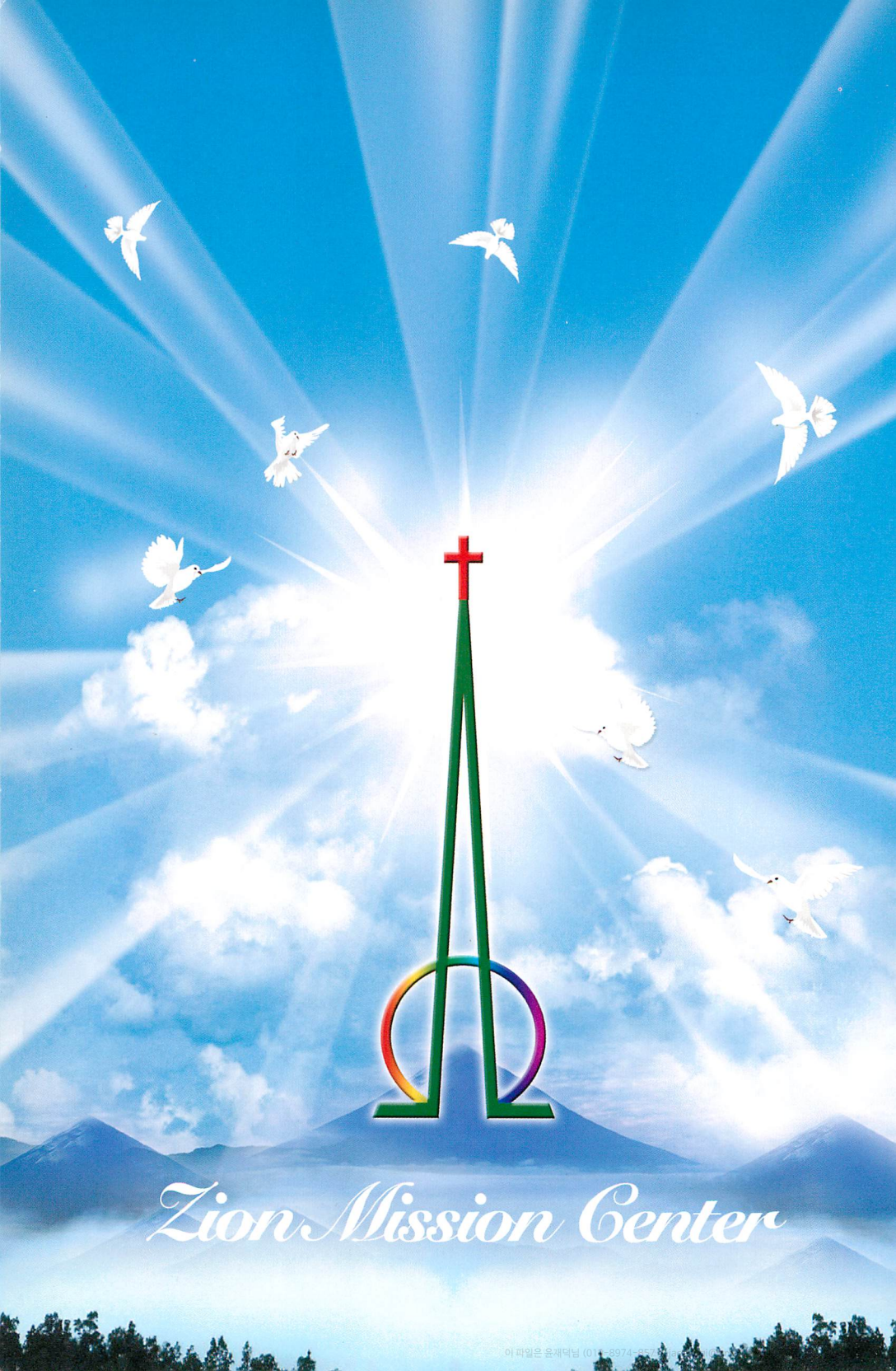
Zion Mission Center

Logo for the Holy City New Jerusalem
Korean patent number: 42-0001873

Logo for Zion Mission Center
Korean patent number: 0000731

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▲ Jerusalem (current capital of Israel)—holy land of Physical Israel

▼ The creation of heaven and earth for New Spiritual Israel. A panoramic view of Cheonggye mountain and the city of Gwacheon, Gyeonggi Province, Republic of Korea.

The Creation of Heaven and Earth

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Gn 1:1 Rv 21:6

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Author's note

This book, *The Creation of Heaven and Earth*, was first begun in Guksabong, which is in front of Gyeryong mountain (formerly called Cheontae mountain), Gyeryong, Choongnam Province, Republic of Korea in 1981. It was completed in 2007 on the outskirts of Gyeryong at a mountain retreat. The manuscript for every book I have written has been completed in 40 days. The manuscript for this book was no exception, but it was delayed by the interference of Satan, who was working through my transcriptionist. After undergoing many such setbacks over the past 27 years, I am finally publishing this book, *The Creation of Heaven and Earth*, on my third attempt.

God's purpose has always been the re-creation of heaven and earth, which he describes in Gn 1. In other words, the entire Bible was written to fulfill Gn 1.

We at Shincheonji have received the word, mastered the Bible, and become God's kingdom and priests. I pray that every person who reads *The Creation of Heaven and Earth* and believes its message will be able to participate with us in the first resurrection.

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Preface

This book, *The Creation of Heaven and Earth,* is a summary and explanation of the one and only God's work of creation and re-creation. It also explains the biblical prophecies and their physical fulfillment, which I have witnessed.

This book covers Gn 1:1 through Rv 22:21. God created the spiritual world first, and then, according to that spiritual pattern, he created the physical world here on earth. Then, after completing his work of creation, God rested. When the world he created became corrupt, God started over and re-created it. God always follows the same process when he creates. He selects a pastor, creates a tabernacle (i.e. a kingdom), and makes a covenant with his people. God's people betray the covenant and are destroyed. God selects a new pastor, who passes judgment and brings salvation. Then, through this new pastor, God re-creates his kingdom, makes a new covenant with his people, and is finally able to rest.

The 66 books of the Bible are divided into the Old and New Testaments. They both contain history, teachings, prophecies, and fulfillment. Biblical prophecies are always recorded in the pattern of betrayal, destruction, and salvation. Since they are promised in this way, they are also fulfilled according to the pattern of betrayal, destruction, and salvation. Biblical prophecies are spoken in advance through the prophets after they receive a vision of a coming physical reality. Because of this, when the prophecies are fulfilled in the future, the prophecies themselves become the evidence that testifies about that physical reality. True Christians

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must believe in the words of the prophecies both before and after they are revealed; we must believe in the prophecies and in their physical fulfillment when they come.

The work of Jesus Christ can be easily divided into his two comings. Although both have many similarities including a beginning and an end, the work of the first coming and the work of the second coming are different. New Testament prophecies use the names of people and places mentioned in the Old Testament figuratively. The fulfillment of the Old Testament occurred with a battle between God and Satan, and in the same way, the fulfillment of the New Testament also occurs with a battle between God and Satan. This epic battle, which ends with victory for those who belong to God, results in the fulfillment of God's salvation and the establishment of his eternal kingdom. Now, in this time of fulfillment, all believers must find the pastor, temple, and seminary promised by the Bible. They must unite with God's promised pastor to attain salvation. Jesus Christ's world of the first heaven has ended and a new heaven has been re-created. Therefore, all believers must come out of their churches, which are a part of the first heaven, and become a part of the twelve tribes of the new heaven. They must all learn the new song to enter heaven.

Since its most important points are repeated a few times for the benefit of the reader, this book is more easily understood if read straight from beginning to end. I pray that all of you will engrave the words of this book in your hearts, record your names in the book of life, and become a part of the twelve tribes of heaven. Amen.

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Summary

Ever since God created the spiritual and physical worlds, he has been continuously working toward the unification of these two worlds (Jn 5:17; Mt 6:10). God's work of re-creation has gone on so long because the disobedience of man has repeatedly prevented God from accomplishing his final goal. At some point in the future, spirit and flesh will become one, but that unification will be difficult to recognize for people who do not understand the words of God's prophecies.

The names of people and places recorded in the Old Testament are mostly meant to be literally understood. Many of those names of people and places in the Old Testament appear again in the New Testament. In the New Testament, however, they are meant to be figuratively understood. If we fail to understand and keep the prophecies of the New Testament that have been sealed by figurative language, we too, will become like the people of Adam's time, Noah's time, Moses' time, and the time of Jesus' first coming that could not attain salvation because they did not believe.

If the entire Bible could be summarized into four events, they would be: the selection of a pastor, the betrayal of the chosen people after they break their covenant, the destruction of the chosen people by the gentiles, and the arrival of salvation through a new pastor. Stated more simply, this is the process of creation and re-creation. All creation and re-creation are accomplished through this process, which is recorded in Gn 1. If the chosen people who made a covenant with God betray and fall away, God selects a

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new pastor, destroys the previous world, and uses his new pastor to create a new world.

Prophecies about the future recorded in the New Testament are given by God to Jesus. Jesus gives them to the advocate (i.e. the holy spirit), the advocate gives them to the pastor promised in Revelation, and the promised pastor finally gives them to believers (Jn 16:13-15; Rv 1:1-2). Thus, the route of passage for the understanding of the fulfillment of New Testament prophecies is: God to Jesus to the advocate to the promised pastor to believers.

The Bible promises a pastor, whom believers must find, and details how God's promised pastor will appear (Jn 14-16; Rv 1:1-2). Although believers have remained in their own churches under general pastors for a long time, all believers must find God's promised pastor when the prophecies of Revelation are fulfilled.

In Revelation, Apostle John sends letters to the messengers of the seven churches in Asia Minor (Rv 2-3) according to Jesus' command (Rv 1:9-11). This is, however, something that happened in John's vision 2,000 years ago. It did not happen physically. The seven churches of Asia Minor symbolize the church of the seven golden lampstands that appears when Revelation is fulfilled.

Believers who understand and keep the words of Revelation will become God's promised kingdom and priests (Rv 1:3, 6). On the other hand, anyone who adds to or subtracts from the words of Revelation will be forbidden to enter heaven and will receive the plagues recorded in Revelation (Rv 22:18-19). Since God and Jesus—who are working through the promised pastor—fulfill all

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the New Testament prophecies, the conclusion of the Bible, which began in Genesis, finally comes (Rv 21:6). This is why God is called Alpha and Omega; his kingdom and people, born from the seed of heaven, are finally created. God descends upon and unites with the people he creates on this earth. This is how God's original objective of creating heaven and earth is accomplished.

God chose the Old Testament prophets, gave them the prophecies in advance, and then worked through Christ to fulfill those prophecies (Jn 19:30). In the same way, Jesus, along with his angels, works through the chosen pastor to fulfill his prophecies (Rv 1:6). This all occurs according to the promises Jesus made to his disciples in the New Testament. Now, at this time of fulfillment, all believers must recognize and believe in the opened prophecies and their revealed physical fulfillment (Jn 14:29).

All believers should consider the events of the past that are recorded in the Bible as a mirror and as a warning. They must keep the words of the new covenant, which Jesus gave us. Those who believe and keep the promises recorded in the Bible are the ones who will enter heaven (Mt 7:21; Rv 1:3).

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Part 1

A Treatise on the Bible

I have written these things to you who
believe in the name of the Son of God so
that you may know that you have eternal life.
(1 Jn 5:13)

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1. The author and purpose of the Bible

God is the author of the entire Bible, but 35-40 prophets and apostles recorded God's words for him.

Human beings have been under death ever since Adam sinned, but God recorded the Bible to save people and grant them eternal life (Jn 5:39). Jesus said, "For this is the will of my Father—for everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him to have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day," (Jn 6:40). Apostle John also recorded, "I have written these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life," (1 Jn 5:13).

- You study the scriptures thoroughly because you think in them you possess eternal life, and it is these same scriptures that testify about me. (Jn 5:39)

- For this is the will of my Father – for everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him to have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. (Jn 6:40)

- I have written these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. (1 Jn 5:13)

2. Categorizing biblical contents

The Bible is divided into the Old and New Testaments. The Old Testament consists of 39 books that were recorded by God's

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prophets before Jesus' first coming. The New Testament consists of 27 books recorded by apostles after Jesus' first coming. The Bible, therefore, includes a total of 66 books. The time between Adam and Abraham covers about 2,000 years; another 2,000 years passed between Abraham and Jesus. Now, since it has been approximately 2,000 years since Jesus' first coming, the Bible encompasses about 6,000 years of history.

The contents of the Bible can be divided into four categories: history, teachings, prophecy, and fulfillment. Prophecies concern future events. Prophecies are written in figurative language and are always fulfilled according to the logic of betrayal, destruction, and salvation. New Testament prophecies, in particular, use the names of people and places mentioned in the Old Testament figuratively.

3. The attitude for reading and understanding the Bible

The Bible does not belong to the earth, nor is it from the thoughts of men. It is God's book that records God's will. It is a guide to true religion[1]. It is only when God, who gave us this book, teaches us that we are able to understand. We cannot fathom the depth of God's will through what we have seen, heard, felt, or otherwise experienced in the physical world.

Since we cannot free ourselves from the limitations of the flesh, we must pray to God, the author of the Bible, begging him to help

1 – The Korean word for religion, *chonggyo* (종교 or 宗教), is of Chinese origin. Its two characters mean *highest* and *teaching* respectively.

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us understand his will when we read his words. Still, even if we pray diligently, there are times when we simply cannot understand God's will. Concerning the prophecies that have yet to be fulfilled, we can only understand them when their fulfillment comes and is explained by God's chosen pastor (Rv 1:1-3).

We should come before the scriptures with the same attitude we would have if we were face-to-face with God. We should be thinking, "These words are the things God is saying to me. Reading God's word is the same as looking at God." If we do not have this mind-set, the scriptures are of no value to us. Only believers who look at the Bible with fear and trembling are able to meet the God that wrote himself into the scriptures.

Today, we can only read the Bible because Jesus, the prophets, and the apostles gave their lives to pass it down through the generations. How did the martyrs feel as they shed their blood to give us the Bible? How did God feel as he silently watched the heartbreaking death of the martyrs? We, too, must have that same heart when we read the scriptures so we will be able to fulfill God's purpose.

4. The teachings of men

It is impossible for people to understand the content and the physical fulfillment of the prophecies in God's scroll (Rv 5) until it is opened and revealed. This is because God's scroll is sealed with seven seals. Can a man open the scroll that God has kept sealed for so long before God is ready for it to be opened? This is why

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we only have the teachings of men until God's scroll is revealed (Is 29:9-13).

There is a time for the contents of the scroll to be hidden, but there is also a time for them to be revealed. When the appointed time comes, God opens the words of revelation and explains them to us.

There are believers who have learned nothing but the teachings of men. What can be said about their spiritual state? God said, "These people say they are loyal to me; they say wonderful things about me, but they are not really loyal to me. Their worship consists of nothing but man-made ritual," (Is 29:13).

Since the rules and traditions of men originate in the minds of men, they neither align with nor do they satisfy God's heart. The more people learn the teachings of men, the farther they stray from God. When a believer who is full of the teachings of men calls on God, his prayers and sacrifices are futile because they are based on doctrines made up by other people (Is 1:10-15, 16:12).

What believers really need is the word of revelation given by God. A believer's heart can only be united with God's heart when the sealed scroll is opened and its words are delivered to the people. When that happens people are able to know God correctly, and in doing so, obtain eternal life. There is no salvation for those who have only learned the teachings of men, because revelation is the only path to eternal life and salvation (Mt 11:27; Jn 17:3; Rv 1:1-3).

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5. Types of revelation

A *revelation* is something, formerly sealed or hidden, that has been opened and made known to people. There are two types of revelation: vision revelation and physical fulfillment revelation. Physical fulfillment revelation appears when the vision revelation is fulfilled to become a physical reality.

Jesus said, "Now this is eternal life—that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you sent," (Jn 17:3). He also said, "No one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son decides to reveal him," (Mt 11:27). These passages tell us that people who do not receive the revelation do not know God and do not inherit eternal life. Thus, they cannot be considered orthodox.

Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies in his first coming. He also testified about the revelation he received from God to his disciples; he gave them physical fulfillment revelation. Just like the disciples, we also must listen to the words of the promised pastor if we want to receive the words of revelation because it is the promised pastor who receives the revelation from God.

The words of revelation in the time of the second coming are delivered to believers in exactly the same way they were delivered in the time of the first coming. The book of Revelation details the route of passage of the revelation of Jesus Christ in the time of the second coming. Jesus receives the scroll sealed with seven seals from God, and he reveals it by breaking its seals (Rv 5, 6, 8, 10). Jesus gives this revelation to an angel, who then delivers the open, revealed scroll to Apostle John. John obeys the voice from heaven

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and testifies to God's servants what is written in the scroll and what he has seen (Rv 10:8-11).

The book of Revelation, which Apostle John recorded roughly 2,000 years ago, is a revelation through vision. When the time of its fulfillment comes, the vision revelation is not fulfilled literally. Instead, what was figuratively prophesied in the vision revelation is figuratively fulfilled when it becomes a physical reality. That is when the promised pastor, who comes in the position of Apostle John, sees and hears the words of the revealed scroll from the angel. He sees and hears the events of the physical fulfillment and delivers that message to us. This is physical fulfillment revelation.

The faith we must have when the prophecies are fulfilled is faith, both in the words of the prophecies themselves and in their precise physical fulfillment. Vision revelation is simply a means to seal the meaning of the prophecies until the physical fulfillment revelation appears. For this reason, all believers must know and understand the words of the revelation in visions so that they may recognize and believe in the physical fulfillment when it comes.

6. The sealed book and revelation

✥ [9]You will be shocked and amazed! You are totally blind! They are drunk, but not because of wine; they stagger, but not because of beer. [10]For the Lord has poured out on you a strong urge to sleep deeply. He has shut your eyes (the prophets), and covered your heads (the seers). [11]To you this entire prophetic revelation is like words in a sealed scroll. When they hand it to one who can read and say, "Read

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> this," he responds, "I can't, because it is sealed." [12]Or when they hand the scroll to one who can't read and say, "Read this," he says, "I can't read." [13]The sovereign master says, "These people say they are loyal to me; they say wonderful things about me, but they are not really loyal to me. Their worship consists of nothing but man-made ritual. [14]Therefore I will again do an amazing thing for these people – an absolutely extraordinary deed. Wise men will have nothing to say, the sages will have no explanations." (Is 29:9-14)

Approximately 2,700 years ago the prophet Isaiah saw visions regarding Judah and Jerusalem (Is 1:1). Approximately 2,000 years ago Apostle John, who was in exile on the island of Patmos, received the revelation of Jesus Christ (Rv 1:1-2). The visions and revelations these two men received included information about God's sealed book (Is 29:9-14; Rv 5, 10). Let us understand the sealed book and the process of revelation more deeply.

As I have already mentioned, the scriptures can be divided according to their content into history, teachings, prophecy, and fulfillment. Scriptures dealing with history, teachings, and physical fulfillment that has already come are obvious to everyone, so we cannot say they are sealed. Prophecies, on the other hand, are sealed because they are revelations from God in visions that point to a future physical fulfillment that has not yet appeared.

In the same way, the sealed books that the prophet Isaiah and Apostle John saw in their visions are hidden revelations of future events. God said, "Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it. For the revelation awaits

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an appointed time," (Hb 2:2-3, NIV). Since the book is sealed by God until an appointed time, no one is able to know the meaning of what is recorded. According to Is 29, God has shut the eyes of the prophets and covered the heads of the seers. Therefore, neither the literate nor the illiterate know the content of what is recorded in the prophetic books. If this is true, then what have pastors been teaching their congregation members? They teach the rules and traditions of men.

God said, "These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me," (Is 29:13, NIV). Believers' hearts are the temples of God (1 Cor 3:16). Paul wrote that anyone who does not have the spirit of Christ does not belong to him (Rom 8:9). Those who have only been taught the teachings of men and whose hearts are far from God will eventually become gentiles.

Is it reasonable for someone who has only received and taught others the teachings of men to claim: "I have received salvation. I have received the holy spirit. I am orthodox."? No, it is wrong. It is possible to deceive other people, but it is foolish to think that you can deceive God. Thus, Is 29:9-14 shows us that until God's true revelation is opened the only thing people can do is carry out their lives of faith through the teachings of men.

While all pastors are teaching according to the rules and traditions of men, God again carries out an amazing work (Is 29:14). This work is accomplished when people believe in both the sealed words—that have never been understood—and in the revealed

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physical fulfillment that comes according to the sealed prophecies. If the teachings of men were perfect truth, why would God have to carry out this amazing work again? I will explain in more detail in Part 3, which is a summary and explanation of Revelation, and in Part 4, which is a collection of topical essays.

7. The Bible and eternal life

As I mentioned in section one about the author and purpose of the Bible, God's reason for recording the 66 books of the Bible was to give his people eternal life (Jn 5:39; 1 Jn 5:13). The Bible records the history of God's chosen people along with various teachings and prophecies about the future. All of these together are designed to accomplish his purpose in bestowing eternal life. For this reason, believers should focus on the goal of eternal life while studying the Bible.

Not surprisingly, the Bible introduces a certain food that gives eternal life. It is introduced as the fruit of the tree of life in Gn 3:22 and as Jesus' flesh and blood in Jn 6:54. The fruit of the tree of life are the words of God's true pastor. This will be discussed further in Part 2, which is entitled "A treatise on the creation of heaven and earth."

Let us read the following references regarding Jesus' blood and flesh.

- [51]I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats from this bread he will live forever. The bread that I will give for the

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life of the world is my flesh ... [53]unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in yourselves. (Jn 6:51, 53)

- [1]In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was fully God. [4]In him was life, and the life was the light of mankind. (Jn 1:1, 4)

- [1]This is what we proclaim to you: what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and our hands have touched (concerning the word of life – [2]and the life was revealed, and we have seen and testify and announce to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us). (1 Jn 1:1-2)

God is the word, and because Jesus is God's son, Jesus is also the word. This is why when we listen to Jesus' words we are eating Jesus' flesh and drinking Jesus' blood. When we understand Jesus' words we seal them in our hearts.

Jesus' words contain life, and so they are the food of life for us. The fruit of the tree of life and Jesus' flesh and blood all refer to the word of life. Jesus gives the word of life to the pastor promised in the New Testament and tells him to testify those words to us (Rv 2:7, 17; Rv 10).

Just like Elijah's body, Jesus' physical body did not remain in the earth (grave). He ascended to heaven with a transfigured body, just like the bodies of Elijah and Moses seen with Jesus on the mountain of transfiguration.

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8. The Bible is for God's chosen people

The Bible is the word God has spoken to his chosen people. There are several terms in the Bible that symbolize God's chosen people (e.g., Israel, Judah, Jerusalem, Zion), and without knowing these terms refer to the chosen people, it is impossible to understand the scriptures correctly.

In the time of the Old Testament, God's chosen people were the people of Physical Israel who arose from Abraham; in the time of the New Testament, God's chosen people were the people of Spiritual Israel who believed in Jesus. By refusing to accept Jesus at the first coming, the people of Physical Israel disqualified themselves from remaining God's chosen people. This is why Christians—those who accept Jesus—have become the new chosen people (Jn 1:11-12). It is impossible to understand the Bible or God's will without considering this. If God is telling us about a chicken and we imagine a cow, we will obviously deviate from his will.

In looking at the following passages it becomes clear that God carries out his work through his chosen people.

- Here is the message about Judah and Jerusalem that was revealed to Isaiah son of Amoz during the time when Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah reigned over Judah. (Is 1:1)

- "Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and with the seed of beast. (Jer 31:27, NASB)

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- [4]He said to me, "Son of man, go to the house of Israel and speak my words to them. [5]For you are not being sent to a people of unintelligible speech and difficult language, but to the house of Israel." (Ez 3:4-5)

- [5]From the tribe of Judah, twelve thousand were sealed, from the tribe of Reuben, twelve thousand, from the tribe of Gad, twelve thousand ... [8]from the tribe of Zebulun, twelve thousand, from the tribe of Joseph, twelve thousand, from the tribe of Benjamin, twelve thousand were sealed. (Rv 7:5-8)

God reveals his plans to his chosen people, rears them, and makes a covenant with them. If they were to keep the covenant, they would become the tree of life that receives salvation. Out of all people in the world, they become God's kingdom and priests (Ex 19:5-6). If, however, they break the covenant, God will punish them for what they have done (Am 3:2).

The fact that the Bible is given to the chosen people does not mean salvation is limited only to the chosen people. It simply means God gives salvation in a certain order; first to the chosen people, and then to the gentiles. The gospel of Jesus at the first coming was initially given to the people of Physical Israel, but when they did not receive it, it was testified to the gentiles. If the gentiles accept the gospel and believe it, they too can become God's people and receive salvation.

God cannot save all of humanity at once. Humanity has been under Satan's control for so long that many refuse to return to God upon hearing his word. God first selects his chosen people and

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then trains them to be his priests. He gives them the words that will heal all nations. Revelation 7 records the sealing of the 144,000 people who become priests. After these priests of God are sealed, a great multitude, dressed in robes made white in the blood of Jesus, comes from every nation, tribe, people, and language to receive salvation. Thus, the reason God appoints his chosen people first becomes clear; in doing so, salvation is extended to all of humanity.

The Bible was recorded because of Adam's sin, which was when God's chosen people betrayed him. Betrayal is breaking the covenant you have made with God. If Adam, who was the first one chosen by God, had not betrayed, humanity would never have been imprisoned under sin. There would have been no need for God to continue working to save humanity, nor would there have been a need for the Bible to be recorded so its stories could be made known to everyone. God could simply have rested.

In every generation, Satan works to hinder the chosen people until they betray and are destroyed. Adam and Eve betrayed, and then, in Noah's generation, it was Ham and Canaan who betrayed. Throughout the Old Testament and even into the first coming of Jesus, the people of Physical Israel betrayed God. Today, in the end times, the tabernacle of the chosen people mentioned in Rv 2, 3, and 13 has been deceived by the Nicolaitans and has also betrayed God.

God recorded the Bible to ensure that his chosen people do not betray and to ensure they are not destroyed by Satan. In spite of this, God's chosen people have continually disappointed him.

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Today, as Christians, we have become God's chosen people. We must be aware that the New Testament is a letter and a book of covenant for us. Let us not follow the steps of the chosen people who have continually betrayed God. As his new chosen people, we must fulfill our role in accomplishing God's plan.

9. Misunderstanding the Bible

The Sadducees, who did not believe in the resurrection, tried to test Jesus at the time of the first coming by questioning him. They asked about a woman who sequentially married and lived with all six of her original husband's brothers after her husband and each brother died. They asked which of the seven would be the woman's husband at the time of the resurrection. Jesus replied to them, "You are deceived, because you don't know the scriptures or the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven ... He is not the God of the dead but of the living!" (Mt 22:29-32; Mk 12:24-27).

Clearly, anyone who misunderstands the scriptures will also misunderstand God's will and his power. Just as these Jewish leaders did at the first coming, today's Christian pastors have many misunderstandings regarding the Bible. They interpret things recorded in figurative language literally and teach these lies to their congregation members.

Shincheonji, on the other hand, has mastered not only the books of history and instruction in the Bible, but also the prophetic books of both the Old and New Testaments, which were written

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in figurative language. Shincheonji has mastered them and is testifying about them. We are teaching the book of Revelation along with its physical fulfillment. Revelation is the key to the figurative language and represents the completion of the Bible. Our revelation is the most perfect theological revelation in the entire history of Christianity! We can explain the Bible clearly, even to those ignorant of the Bible, as long as they are willing to come and learn for six months. This is true religion; this is the best and highest teaching. This is the work of the holy spirit (1 Cor 2:10).

God is not the god of the dead, but of the living (Mt 22:32; Jn 6:63). The flesh of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob died and disappeared, but their spirits are still alive and remain with God. Truly, God is with those whose spirits are alive.

Some people have living flesh, but a dead spirit. Others, in contrast, have died in the flesh, but their spirit remains alive. A third category of person has both a living body and spirit. A would-be disciple of Jesus asked Jesus for permission to bury his dead father before following. Jesus replied to him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead," (Mt 8:21-22; Lk 9:59-60). In this passage, the dead who bury their own dead are people whose spirits have died even though their flesh remains, but the person who is being buried is someone whose body has also died. Jesus said, "Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Instead, fear the one who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell," (Mt 10:28).

God said he wants us to know him more than he wants sacrifices or burnt offerings (Hos 6:6, KJV). Jesus said that only those

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who act according to God's will may enter heaven (Mt 7:21). Paul encouraged us not to be foolish, but to be wise by understanding God's will (Eph 5:17).

We must learn from the attitude of the believers in Berea at the time of the early church. They received the word with great eagerness and examined the scriptures daily to determine whether the message they heard was true (Acts 17:11). All believers must understand the Bible accurately so that they too may correctly know God.

10. The Lord's return and the signs of the end times

What are the signs of Jesus' return and of the end times? When and where will these signs appear? They are recorded in detail in Mt 24 and 25 and in the book of Revelation. Moreover, it is written in 2 Thes 2:1-4, that the savior, Jesus, will come only after the events of betrayal and destruction. According to these passages, therefore, the signs of the Lord's return and of the end times are simply the events of betrayal and destruction. Since I have explained this in detail in other books (*The Ministry of Jesus Christ* and *The Secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven: The Physical Fulfillment of Revelation*), I will only summarize these signs here.

Jesus' speech in Mt 24 is the answer Jesus gave his disciples when they asked him about the fall of Jerusalem and about the signs of his coming and the end of the age. When Mt 24 refers to the fall of the temple in Jerusalem, it is not referring to the physical temple. It is referring to the destruction of the tabernacle of God's chosen

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people. Since the generation of Physical Israel ended in the time of the first coming, the physical temple in Jerusalem is no longer meaningful to God. The physical temple was used figuratively to refer to Spiritual Israel. Thus, Jesus was saying that the spiritual temple, the Christian church, will fall in the end times. This temple that will fall is called the tabernacle of heaven in Rv 13. The end of the age refers to the end of Spiritual Israel—the end of the Christian world created by Jesus. This is not the end of the world, because Ecc 1:4 says that generations come and go, but the earth God has created remains forever.

Jesus declared that nations would rise up against nations, and kingdoms would rise up against kingdoms as a sign of the end of the age (Mt 24:7). These nations and kingdoms that rise up against one another refer to the congregation members of the tabernacle of Spiritual Israel, who are God's chosen people, and to the organization of Spiritual Babylon, who are the spiritual gentiles. The battles between these groups are not physical. They are spiritual battles for religious authority. In this battle, the Babylonian destroyers that invade God's Tabernacle Temple are victorious and are able to take control of the holy altar (Mt 24:15; Rv 13:6-8). As a result, the tabernacle of the chosen people becomes a possession of the invading destroyers. The pastors of the tabernacle of heaven are stripped of their religious authority, and its congregation members go back to being part of the world. Matthew 24:29 describes these events when it records the sun and moon being darkened and the stars falling from heaven. This is what it means for the powers

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of heaven to be shaken. In the end times, the Christian world is plunged into spiritual darkness—day becomes night.

In the midst of this dark night, angels come with a loud trumpet call to gather God's elect from all four directions. This seventh and final trumpet announces God's salvation (Rv 11:15). When the destroyers take over the holy place (i.e., the temple), believers must escape and flee to the mountain (Mt 24:15-16). Only those who are awake and alert, those who are able to endure the time of suffering to the end, will be taken by the angels to Mt. Zion, which is God's shelter of salvation.

Thus, Jesus will finally return to earth after the signs of the end of the age take place. These signs include battles among nations, destroyers standing in the holy place, and the darkening of the sun, moon, and stars. These events usher in the spiritual night that heralds the end of the age and Jesus' second coming.

11. Prophecy and fulfillment

In his zeal, God accomplishes everything he has prophesied (Is 9:7, 14:24). God said, "The promise that I make does not return to me, having accomplished nothing. No, it is realized as I desire and is fulfilled as I intend," (Is 55:11). In other words, he fulfills everything according to what he has written in the Bible.

Let us learn about the 6,000 year history of God's work. Adam who became a living being (Gn 2) was thrown out of the Garden of Eden (Gn 3) because he ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. His spirit died just as God prophesied (Gn 2:17)

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and Adam's descendants passed down the story of these events to their descendents.

Noah, who was the ninth descendent of Adam, was saved along with his family because they boarded the ark. Those who did not board the ark were swept away in the flood just as God warned (Gn 7). Noah's generation then made known to the next generation that Adam and his descendents had been destroyed in the flood because of their sins. They also passed down the story of how Noah and his family were saved on the ark and how they began again on Mt. Ararat (Gn 8).

God made a promise with Abraham (Gn 15), who was the tenth descendent of Noah. God then came to Moses according to his promise four generations (430 years) after his people entered Egypt. After the Israelites escaped Egypt, God worked through Moses on Mt. Sinai (Ex 12; Ex 19). Moses' successor Joshua entered the land of Canaan and began anew in Shechem (Jo 24). The descendants of Joshua passed down the account these events to the following generations.

After Solomon's sin (1 Kgs 11-12), God prophesied through the Old Testament prophets that he would send the Christ to the descendants of Israel and he came to Jesus roughly 2,000 years ago to fulfill his promise (Mt 3:16; Lk 3:22). Jesus began his ministry in Galilee (Mt 4), fulfilled all the Old Testament prophecies concerning himself (Lk 24:44; Jn 19:30), and prophesied about what would be fulfilled in the future at the time of the second coming. Since that time, Jesus, his disciples, and the rest of the pastors of

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Christianity have been preaching this gospel of heaven (Lk 22:14-20; Jn 14:29; Acts 1:8).

God accomplishes the promises of the New Testament in the same way he has always kept his promises. In the time of the second coming, God comes to the pastor promised in the New Testament and fulfills the events of Revelation. The testimony regarding this fulfillment will be preached to all future generations as the eternal gospel (Rv 14:6). In every generation God works through his chosen pastor at the appointed time to fulfill his promises (Hb 2:2-3; Jn 16:25). Then, the testimony of the fulfillment is preached to the next generation.

If a prophecy is compared to a seed, then the prophecy's fulfillment is the fruit that grows from that seed. Regardless of whether the characters promised in the Bible belong to God or to Satan, they will all surely appear in physical fulfillment of God's prophecies. If God made promises without fulfilling them, why would anyone acknowledge and believe in him as the living God?

If Jesus had not acted according to the prophecies, no one would have acknowledged him as the promised Christ. We believe in Jesus as the Christ, because he came according to and fulfilled all the Old Testament prophecies (Lk 24:27; Jn 19:30).

God will fulfill the New Testament prophecies just like he fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies (Rv 21:6), but we will only be capable of recognizing that fulfillment if we are familiar with the prophecies themselves. Furthermore, God has given us the words of the New Testament so we can be saved by understanding and

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believing them (Jn 14:29). Today, as he has in every generation, God becomes the God of those who believe and keep his covenant.

Throughout the Bible, God makes a distinction between those who belong to him and those who belong to the devil. The Bible is an account of the battles these two groups have been fighting for the past 6,000 years. The book of Revelation too, as our primary book of prophecy in the New Testament, reveals who belongs to God and who belongs to the devil and gives an account of the battles between them.

The people who belong to God and the people who belong to Satan appear and act according to the prophecies. In Mt 24, the people who belong to God fight against the people controlled by Satan. Since they are victorious, those who belong to Satan can be found standing on the holy place, God's temple. At this time, salvation is only given to those who are able to escape to the mountain according to Jesus' command. Revelation 13 also gives an account of this event. In that account, the group of the beast—under the control of the dragon (i.e., Satan)—invades, defeats, and destroys the congregation members of the tabernacle of heaven. This is accomplished as the beast marks the congregation members' foreheads and right hands with its name. In the midst of this event, only those who understand what is happening and escape to Mt. Zion will be saved.

Thus, the pastors who belong to God, the pastors who belong to the devil, the shelter of salvation, and the scene of destruction are all recorded in the Bible. Believers who obey God's word and

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act according to God's will, as recorded in the Bible, will attain salvation. Anyone who ignores the prophecies of the Bible and their fulfillment will be deceived by Satan and cast into hell; they cannot be saved. For this reason, all believers must be awakened through the word.

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Part 2

A Treatise on the Creation of Heaven and Earth

In the beginning God created
the heavens and the earth. (Gn 1:1)

It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega,
the beginning and the end. (Rv 21:6)

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I. God the Creator

A. Who is God?

He is spirit.

God is spirit, not flesh.

- God is spirit, and the people who worship him must worship in spirit and truth. (Jn 4:24)

He is the creator of all things in heaven and earth.

In Gn 1:1, we see that God created the heavens and the earth in the beginning. John 1:3 says, "All things were created by him, and apart from him not one thing was created that has been created." God created the heavens and the earth and all things in them through the word (Jn 1:1-4). Since all things were created through God, the creator, he is the father of all creation.

No matter how much we respect science, it cannot even create a single blade of grass. God, however, created something out of nothing through the word. God created so that life would exist. All parts of the creation must remain in the father that created them. They must give all thanks and glory to God the Father.

- In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. (Gn 1:1)

- [1]In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was fully God. [2]The Word was with God in the beginning.

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[3]All things were created by him, and apart from him not one thing was created that has been created. [4]In him was life, and the life was the light of mankind. (Jn 1:1-4)

God is self-existent.

No one created God nor did anyone give birth to him. He has been self-existent from the beginning.

✦ [13]Moses said to God, "If I go to the Israelites and tell them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' – what should I say to them?" [14]God said to Moses, "I am that I am." And he said, "You must say this to the Israelites, 'I am has sent me to you.'" (Ex 3:13-14)

B. What does "God" mean?

We call him God because he is the one and only God[1].

The Lord, the creator of the heavens and the earth, is the God of the whole universe. He is the only true God (Is 37:16; Mk 12:29; Jn 5:44, 17:3).

✦ O Lord who commands armies, O God of Israel, who is enthroned on the cherubim! You alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth. You made the sky and the earth. (Is 37:16)

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1 – The Korean name for God is *hananim* (하나님). *Hana* (하나) means *one* and *nim* (님) is an honorific way of referring to a person.

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- Jesus answered, "The most important is: 'Listen, Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.'" (Mk 12:29)

The name of the only God is Jehovah.

God said his name is Jehovah (Ex 3:15).

- God also said to Moses, "You must say this to the Israelites, 'The Lord – the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob – has sent me to you. This is my name forever, and this is my memorial from generation to generation.'" (Ex 3:15)

Since, however, his creation did not dare to call its creator by name, people do not call Jehovah directly. Instead, people simply call him God.

When Christianity (viz. Catholicism) first entered Korea, people used the words *cheonjoo* (천주, 天主), which means *lord of heaven*, and *Haneunim* (하느님), which means *one in heaven*, to refer to God. Christian missionaries wanted to differentiate Christianity from other religions. In order to teach people that the Jehovah God of the Christians was the only true God, the name Hananim was coined. This same logic is at work among English-speaking believers, who often refer to Jehovah God by capitalizing the "G" in God and by using the definite article "the" to indicate that he is *the* one and only true God.

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II. The creation of heaven and earth

A. The creation of the spiritual and physical worlds

The one and only God created the spiritual world before creating the physical world in its image (Gn 1:26-27; Mt 6:10). Everything that was created was created through the word (Jn 1:1-4).

Spirits can move things that have been created in the physical world, but nothing in the physical world can move a spirit. Spirits can appear to people, they can inspire people, and they can even have conversations with people. A person, however, is limited to the flesh and can only interact with the spiritual world through the inspiration of a spirit. God's goal is the unification of these two worlds that he created.

In other words, God sends the spirits that belong to him in the spiritual world to enter and live in the flesh of believers in the physical world. God ultimately wants the spirits and flesh that belong to him to unite and live together as one. The spirit of God left his people because of their sin (Gn 6:1-7). Since, however, the problem of sin has been resolved, God's spirit returns in a desire to reunite with his people (Jn 14:10-11, 20).

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i. Creation of the spiritual world

God, who is a spirit, is not alone in the spiritual world. He is surrounded by the many angels he created. The angels listen to God, praise him, and work according to his will (Ps 103:20-21). They stand before him in service (Dn 7:10), but they also serve those who will inherit salvation (Heb 1:14). Matthew 18:10 says, "See that you do not disdain one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven." From these words of Jesus, it is clear that the angels are always coming and going with God to help believers.

God formed the throne and the structural organization surrounding the throne while he was creating the spiritual kingdom of heaven. At the time of the first coming, Jesus and Apostle John went up to heaven to see the spiritual world before returning to the physical world (Jn 3:13; Rv 4).

According to Rv 4, God sits on his throne, which is surrounded by the 24 elders sitting on their 24 thrones. The seven spirits of the seven lamps are in front of God's throne, and the four living creatures can be found to the north, south, east, and west. The many eyes that cover the front and back of the four living creatures are God's thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand angels. This is not an exact number; it refers to a countless multitude of angels. The four living creatures and the 24 elders appear and work together when each of the events of Revelation are fulfilled.

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The holy spirit of God visited people in every generation to let them know what work they had to accomplish. The spirits even led God's people to begin their lives of faith.

ii. Creation of the physical world

God created everything in the spiritual as well as the physical world (Gn 1:26). He created men in his own image and made them rule over all things (Gn 1:27-28).

❖ [27]God created humankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them, male and female he created them. [28]God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply! Fill the earth and subdue it! Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and every creature that moves on the ground." (Gn 1:27-28)

If God is a spirit, what was his purpose in making the physical world? God's purpose was and is to live together with men in unity. God also wants to receive glory from his entire creation.

Jesus said, "the word you hear is not mine, but the Father's who sent me," (Jn 14:24). He said, "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me," and also, "You will know at that time that I am in my Father and you are in me and I am in you," (Jn 14:11, 20). Furthermore, Jesus also said, "If anyone hears my voice and opens the door I will come into his home and share a meal with him, and he with me," (Rv 3:20). These words testify that the spirit of God enters a believer's heart to dwell there.

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iii. Dividing the spiritual and physical worlds in two

At one point, a catastrophe occurred in the spiritual world that God created—one of God's angels committed a sin. Out of pride and greed, one archangel wanted to be like God. He left his position of authority, abandoned his home, and formed a sect within heaven (Is 14:12-15). The spirits that united with that fallen archangel are evil spirits (Rv 9:14-16). God revealed their identities by calling them "devils" and "Satan," which mean *adversaries* (1 Pt 5:8; 2 Sm 19:22), *alienators*, and *segregators*. To clearly distinguish the spirits that belong to him from these evil spirits, God called his spirits "holy spirits." Thus, when the angel that sinned appeared, the spiritual world was divided in two—into the world of the holy spirits and the world of the evil spirits.

The physical world was divided in two, just as the spiritual world was divided in two. This occurred because the evil spirits masqueraded as angels of light (2 Cor 11:14) to deceive people (1 Tm 4:1-2; 1 Jn 4:1, 3; Rv 20:1-3).

Just as holy spirits can enter a person and live in them as a dwelling place, evil spirits can also make people their homes. A holy spirit enters a person who accepts his word in order to watch over that person, and, in the same way, an evil spirit enters a person who receives his word in order to dominate that person.

It is impossible to discern what type of spirit lives within a person just by looking at his or her physical appearance. It is possible,

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however, to find out what kind of spirits control people by listening to their words and looking at their actions (Mt 7:15-20; Lk 6:43).

This division in the spiritual and physical worlds means that God and Satan fight in the spiritual world while the people that belong to God and the people that belong to Satan argue with one another in the physical world. This battle rages until the end of the world.

Since he has already conquered the world of non-believers, Satan tries to conquer the world of believers. Satan is very crafty and sits in God's temple proclaiming himself to be God (2 Thes 2:4). Once Satan is there, he works even harder to destroy God's chosen people. Satan works much harder within the world of believers than he does in the world of non-believers. Therefore, believers should in no way think that their belief in God has already allowed them to board a train bound for heaven. True believers should be much more cautious and aware of Satan's work than non-believers. Since Satan means *divider* and *opposer*, it should be obvious that anyone who breaks away from us and opposes us is Satan.

iv. The creation of a kingdom that unites spirit and flesh

People in Adam's world lived together with the spirits of God, but because of Adam's betrayal the dream God has had since the beginning of creation—his dream to live among his people—remained unfulfilled. Adam's betrayal forced the spirit of God to leave his people.

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Since that time, God has been working continuously in every generation to re-create his kingdom, unite with, and live among his people. Whenever his chosen people refuse to obey, God can no longer remain with them. That is when he creates a new chosen people through which to work.

The last time the spiritual tabernacle of God was among men was when it descended on Jesus in the time of the first coming (Mt 4:17). Since the Israelites did not believe in Jesus (Jn 1:9-11), the spiritual kingdom of heaven was again forced to leave. From that time to the present, the spiritual tabernacle of God has been unable to unite with God's people.

Jesus spoke about heaven in parables saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches," (Mt 13:31-32, NIV). This parable means that God's spiritual heaven will descend on and unite with the church that is created according to the word of God, which is the seed of heaven (Lk 8:11). People who know the Bible only in part say heaven is a place we go after death. It is clear that this statement is wrong when we read where Paul says, "God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him," (1 Thes 4:14).

Revelation 7:15 says God will spread his tabernacle over the people of New Spiritual Israel, and Rv 14:1 says God and Jesus are on Mt. Zion. Revelation 21:1-3 says the holy city will descend from heaven in the spiritual realm to heaven here on Earth—the

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new heaven and earth, Shincheonji. Therefore, believers must find Shincheonji, upon which God's spiritual tabernacle will descend and remain forever.

B. The six days of creation and the seventh of sabbath rest

[Gn 1; Jn 1:1-4]

Moses received the book of Genesis from God and recorded it about 2,500 years after the creation of Adam. It is a big mistake to think that Genesis is simply a book of history. Genesis 1 records the events of God's spiritual creation and expresses them figuratively in terms of objects in the natural world. Thus, understanding Gn 1 literally and thinking that it records the creation of the natural world raises many contradictions. The order of creation is recorded figuratively to hide the secret of the creation of God's world from the evil one (Mt 13:10-13).

There are two kinds of heaven and earth in Gn 1: the heaven and earth that disappear and the heaven and earth that are newly created. This is why Gn 1 is the blueprint of re-creation.

In every generation, God's creation occurs according to the process recorded in Gn 1. God's work of creation, since the beginning, must be repeated according to the order in Gn 1 in every generation because of the corruption and betrayal of God's people. God's creation is finally completed when Rv 21 is fulfilled.

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i. The first day of creation

✦ [1]In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. [2]Now the earth was formless and empty, and darkness was over the surface of the watery deep, but the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the water. [3]God said, "Let there be light." And there was light! [4]God saw that the light was good, so God separated the light from the darkness. [5]God called the light "day" and the darkness "night." There was evening, and there was morning, there was the first day. (Gn 1:1-5)

According to this scripture, the darkness and the surface of the deep exist on the first day (Gn 1:2) even though it does not say God created them. This means God is creating another heaven and earth because a previous heaven and earth already existed.

The word earth refers to people who are formed from the soil (Gn 2:7). Calling the earth "formless"[2] means there are two or more teachings mixed together to confuse people. When a person's heart is confused by two types of ideologies—good and evil—his heart is like wine mixed with water. Calling the earth "empty" means God has left the hearts of his people, which were his temples (1 Cor 3:16). Since God left them, the hearts of his people have become empty.

The darkness over the surface of the deep signifies that heaven is dark (Jer 4:28). This heaven refers to the believers in God's tabernacle (Gn 37:9-11). God, who is light, said heaven is dark to indicate the state of his people after he leaves them. The spiritual

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2 – The Korean word used for to indicate formlessness in Gn 1:2 is *hondon* (혼돈), which means *confused* or *mixed*.

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similarities between the prophecy of the destruction of Judah and Jerusalem in Jer 4:23-28 and this passage in Gn 1:1-2 are obvious.

❖ [23]I looked at the land and saw that it was an empty wasteland. I looked up at the sky, and its light had vanished. [24]I looked at the mountains and saw that they were shaking. All the hills were swaying back and forth! [25]I looked and saw that there were no more people, And that all the birds in the sky had flown away. [26]I looked and saw that the fruitful land had become a desert and that all of the cities had been laid in ruins. The Lord had brought this all about because of his blazing anger. [27]All this will happen because the Lord said, "The whole land will be desolate; however, I will not completely destroy it. [28]Because of this the land will mourn and the sky above will grow black. For I have made my purpose known and I will not relent or turn back from carrying it out." (Jer 4:23-28)

The water the spirit of God is hovering over refers to the world (Dn 7:3, 17). God hovers over the water to find a light. What exactly is that light?

The light God is seeking in the world is a pastor after God's own heart who has the word of truth. Jesus said, "I have come as a light into the world," (Jn 12:46). He also said, "I am the light of the world. The one who follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life," (Jn 8:12). God was emphasizing the role of Jesus as a light when he said, "This is my son, my chosen one. Listen to him," (Lk 9:35).

God chooses a pastor and uses him as a light shining in the darkness. Obviously, darkness refers to ignorant hearts (1 Thes 5:4-8).

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Since there is only darkness before the existence of the light on the first day, there is nothing to be discerned. The light, however, allows the discernment of truth from lies. This is just like physical light, which separates light from darkness and day from night.

✦ [4]But you, brothers and sisters, are not in the darkness for the day to overtake you like a thief would, [5]for you all are sons of the light and sons of the day. We are neither of the night nor of the darkness. [6]So then we must not sleep as the rest, but must stay alert and sober. [7]For those who sleep, sleep at night and those who get drunk are drunk at night. [8]But since we are of the day, we must stay sober by putting on the breastplate of faith and love and as a helmet our hope for salvation. (1 Thes 5:4-8)

The very first thing God does when he re-creates is to choose the one who possesses the light of the truth among the many dark, ignorant souls that exist at the time. In each generation, God chose a pastor after his own heart and worked with him—he chose Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus through whom he could create a new world.

ii. The second day of creation

✦ [6]God said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters and let it separate water from water. [7]So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. It was so. [8]God called the expanse "sky." There was evening, and there was morning, a second day. (Gn 1:6-8)

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After God finds the light on the first day, he creates an expanse among the waters and uses it to separate the water above from the water below. He calls the expanse "sky." What is this expanse also known as the sky, and what are the waters above and below it?

The expanse that is created among the waters represents the new heaven that is established through the light God creates after the heaven of the first day is darkened. It is the new tabernacle created in the midst of the waters from the first day. In other words, it is created in the midst of the world. The pastor God chooses as a light on the first day leads this tabernacle. God reveals in Joseph's dream that Jacob's family is like the sun, moon, and stars (Gn 37:9-10). This is why the tabernacle where Jacob's family dwells is heaven. The expanse created on the second day is also the tabernacle of the chosen people, which is like Jacob's dwelling place.

After God chooses a pastor in every generation he works to build a tabernacle. For example, after he chose Adam (i.e., the light), he created the Garden of Eden (i.e., the tabernacle). After God chose him, Moses built the tabernacle according to the pattern God showed him (Ex 25:8-9). At the time of Revelation's fulfillment, after God chooses him, the one who overcomes builds the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony (Rv 15:1-5).

The water above, which is separated from the water below when the expanse is created, is the revealed word of God (Rv 10:1-2). The water below the expanse represents the rules and traditions of men (Is 29:9-13). The waters above and the waters below refer to truth and lies, respectively.

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The word of God is compared variously to rain, dew, and water in Dt 32:1-2 and Am 8:11. If the word of God is water, then the water that comes from heaven is the word of revelation given by God and the water from below the expanse is the word of the world, which is created by men researching the Bible.

Just as darkness and light are separated by the presence of light on the first day, the water above and the water below are separated by the presence of the expanse that is created between the waters on the second day. John 3:31-34 says that the one from the earth speaks earthly things and the one from above testifies to what he has seen in heaven. In other words, the water above the expanse represents the words of heaven, which are truth, and the water below the expanse represents the words of the earth, which are lies. The water above the expanse and the water below it are distinguished in the time of judgment. At that time, anyone who desires the truth will come into the light (Jn 3:19-21).

iii. The third day of creation

✦ [9]God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place and let dry ground appear." It was so. [10]God called the dry ground "land" and the gathered waters he called "seas." God saw that it was good. [11]God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: plants yielding seeds according to their kinds, and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds." It was so. [12]The land produced vegetation – plants yielding seeds according to their kinds, and trees bearing fruit

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with seed in it according to their kinds. God saw that it was good.
[13]There was evening, and there was morning, a third day. (Gn 1:9-13)

God, who created the expanse on the second day, creates the land (i.e., the earth) on the third day. This is the appearance of the framework of God's ultimate objective, the creation of heaven and earth.

Dry land appears according to God's command that the water under the sky be gathered to one place. This water, or more precisely, the surface of the water, is where God had been looking for the light. God calls the dry ground "land" and he calls the gathered waters "sea." Since, however, there was already a darkened heaven and an empty, formless earth on the first day, this earth created on the third day is clearly a new earth.

Since the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground (Gn 2:7), the land that appears on the third day represents the chosen people. The chosen people are believers gathered as they follow the pastor chosen as the light on the first day. The chosen people, represented by the dry land that appears on the third day, dwell in the tabernacle created on the second day. When the water and land are separated, the waters are gathered and called the sea. This sea represents the world. The land appears as the waters from below are gathered to one place. This event symbolizes the appearance of God's chosen people in the world. The tabernacle of God's chosen people grows and is eventually made known to the world as more and more believers are evangelized and gathered there.

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The vegetation—the plants yielding seed according to their kinds and the trees that bear fruit—created on the third day represent believers. Isaiah 40:6-8 says that all people are like grass; Dt 32:2 compares the people that receive God's teaching to grass and other vegetation. Furthermore, Jesus said "The seed is the word of God," (Lk 8:11) and called himself the vine (Jn 15:11). James called believers born of the word of truth the firstfruits (Jas 1:18). Apostle John called the 144,000 people of the twelve tribes the firstfruits (Rv 14:1-5).

Let us compare the events of the second coming of Jesus written in Rv 12 to the third day of creation. In Rv 12, the dragon with seven heads and ten horns enters the tabernacle (i.e., heaven) where the woman with the sun, moon, and stars is located. According to Rv 17:1-3, the prostitute sits on many waters and on the beast with seven heads and ten horns. This beast with seven heads and ten horns is, thus, compared to many waters. It could, therefore, be said that the tabernacle entered by the beast with seven heads and ten horns is flooded and becomes spiritually equivalent to the sea. In the end, however, the dragon loses to the son, who has the authority to rule all nations, and to his brothers. They cast the dragon out to the sea, and then God's kingdom is created. This is similar to the third day of creation when the waters are gathered to one place and dry land appears. After God's kingdom is created, many believers will be evangelized and come to the tabernacle led by the son, who will rule all nations. This is reflected in the many kinds of vegetation that grow on the third day of the creation.

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iv. The fourth day of creation

❖ [14]God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them be signs to indicate seasons and days and years, [15]and let them serve as lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth." It was so. [16]God made two great lights – the greater light to rule over the day and the lesser light to rule over the night. He made the stars also. [17]God placed the lights in the expanse of the sky to shine on the earth: [18]to preside over the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. God saw that it was good. [19]There was evening, and there was morning, a fourth day. (Gn 1:14-19)

After God made the expanse among the waters on the second day, he made the sun, moon, and stars to rule over day and night. The sun, moon, and stars give light. What is their relationship to the light of the first day? No plant or animal can live without the sun. If the sun, moon, and stars that God created on the fourth day were the physical sun, moon, and stars, then how could the plants created on the third day live without sunlight? Moreover, if the light of the first day is the physical light we find in the natural world, how can this light be explained? If the light of the first day is the sun and the sun was created again on the fourth day, are there two suns? It is clear that the content of Gn 1 is spiritual and not physical—figurative and not literal. Since we understand the light on the first day as a spiritual light, the sun, moon and stars created on the fourth day are an act of re-creation.

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The sun, moon, and stars created on the fourth day are the chosen people of God, which are like the family of Jacob (Gn 37:9-11). The chosen people are compared to the sun, moon, and stars because they are separated from the world as people who belong to heaven.

The many kinds of plants that appear and grow from the earth on the third day, represent the many believers that come to the tabernacle after being evangelized. Since there are so many, an organization is necessary to rule over them. The creation of the sun, moon, and stars is the work of setting up leaders[3] among God's people with specific titles and duties. Just as God has organized his throne in the spiritual world, on the fourth day he forms the organization of the throne in the physical world within the tabernacle of his chosen people (Rv 4; Mt 6:10).

The greater light (i.e., the sun) is a pastor like Jacob who is in the position of a father. The moon, which is a smaller light that reflects the light of the sun, is an evangelist in the position of a mother. The many stars are believers in the position of children, but even people with the same title and duties have different levels of glory. According to 1 Cor 15:41, the glory of the sun, moon, and stars are different; one star even differs from another in glory. The creation of the sun, moon, and stars reveals that a hierarchy is established in the tabernacle of the chosen people.

The great light of the fourth day, which represents the pastor God has chosen, is the same as the light God found on the first

3 – The Korean word used for "leader" is *samyongja* (사명자), which refers to a person with a mission. The Chinese characters for this word literally mean *a person whose life is used*.

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day. When compared to the rest of the dark world, this pastor is called the light, but when he is compared to the other chosen people, he is called the sun.

When God makes the greater light govern the day, he makes his chosen pastor rule over his chosen people—the children of light. When God makes the smaller light (i.e., the moon) govern the night, he makes evangelists evangelize and rule over the gentiles—the children of darkness. Since the stars govern the day and night along with the sun and moon, an organization is set up to rule over the chosen people and the gentiles. The sun, moon, and stars receive authority to rule over not just God's people, but all the people of the world. God gives his people all the nations of the world. At the second coming, according to Jesus' will, the twelve apostles will sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Mt 19:28). Jesus will grant them authority to judge the world and even the dead after the period of the millennial kingdom (Rv 20).

What, then, does it mean that God uses the heavenly lights of the sun, moon, and stars to separate day from night? What does it mean that he uses them to mark the seasons, days, and years (Gn 1:14)? In nature, day and night, as well as the seasons and years (1 year = 4 seasons = 12 months = 24 solar terms = 365 days; one day = one day and night) are based on the movement of the sun, moon, and stars. God starts counting the days of his new era when he creates the throne and the organization that surrounds it through his chosen pastor, evangelists, and believers.

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Shincheonji considers the first year of the Shincheonji Era the year of the construction of the throne. March 14, 1984 is the anniversary of Shincheonji. In addition, 1984 was the year the universe completed its orbit and returned to its point of origin. It is the first year of the sexagenary cycle[4]. This is when the things of the past wither away and a new world—a world all creation has eagerly awaited—began.

v. The fifth day of creation

✦ [20]God said, "Let the water swarm with swarms of living creatures and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky." [21]God created the great sea creatures and every living and moving thing with which the water swarmed, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. God saw that it was good. [22]God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds multiply on the earth." [23]There was evening, and there was morning, a fifth day. (Gn 1:20-23)

In the passage above, the water on the fifth day represents God's word (Am 8:11), the fish represent believers (Hb 1:14; Mt 4:18-22; Mt 13:47-50), and the birds represent the spirits that belong to God

4 – The Korean term used for sixty sexagenary cycles is yookship gahp-janyeon (육십갑자년). The sexagenary cycle (one cycle = 60 years) originates from the Chinese cyclic numeral system of sixty combinations of two basic cycles: the ten Heavenly Stems and the twelve Earthly Branches. These were used to number days and years. It takes sixty sexagenary cycles (60 x 60 = 3,600 years) for the universe to complete its orbit. Shincheonji began in the first year of the current orbit.

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(Mt 3:16, 13:32). The expanse (i.e., the sky) created on the second day is the tabernacle where God resides, and it is on the fifth day that the holy spirit comes as a bird to carry out its work. When all the creatures and fish become fruitful and multiply, filling the waters of the sea means that many people in many places are evangelized through the word of God.

vi. The sixth day of creation

✥ [24]God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: cattle, creeping things, and wild animals, each according to its kind." It was so. [25]God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the cattle according to their kinds, and all the creatures that creep along the ground according to their kinds. God saw that it was good. [26]Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, after our likeness, so they may rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move on the earth." [27]God created humankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them, male and female he created them. [28]God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply! Fill the earth and subdue it! Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and every creature that moves on the ground." [29]Then God said, "I now give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the entire earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. [30]And to all the animals of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to all the creatures that move on the ground – everything that has the breath of life in it – I give

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> every green plant for food." It was so. [31]God saw all that he had made – and it was very good! There was evening, and there was morning, the sixth day. (Gn 1:24-31)

When the land produces cattle, creeping things, and wild animals on the sixth day, each according to its kind, the lion, ox, and eagle also appear. According to Rv 4:6-7, the lion, ox, and eagle appear along with man to represent the four living creatures. The four living creatures of the spiritual world are heaven's army, which surrounds the throne of God.

God accomplishes his purpose on earth just as he does in heaven. On the sixth day, an organization like the four living creatures in the spiritual world is created on earth. Moses built the tabernacle on earth (Ex 25:8-9) according to what he saw in heaven, which included the four living creatures (1 Kgs 7:27-29).

Since God said, "Let us make humankind in our image," (Gn 1:26), it is clear that there were other entities, referred to as "us," who were involved when God created man. Who else participated in God's creation? This refers to the spiritual organization that belongs to God (Rv 4). God creates an organization on earth like the one he created in heaven.

God created man in his own image and likeness. In order for a person made in the likeness of God to attain God's character, he must be born again through the word of God and the holy spirit. Jesus told us to be born again of water and spirit (Jn 3:3-7) and Apostle Peter said that believers are born again of the word of God

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(1 Pt 1:23). Anyone not born of the word of God becomes a gentile, but anyone who is born again becomes God's child.

God told the man he created on the sixth day to be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, subdue it, and rule over all the living creatures. He gave him all the plants and the fruit-bearing trees as food. This is how man became lord over all things and the heir of God who stands to inherit God's possessions.

The Israelites provide an example of how God's command to man on the sixth day has been carried out. God told Abraham his descendants would become slaves of a gentile nation and that they would suffer for 400 years before coming out with great possessions (Gn 15:13-14). It was God that allowed the descendants of Abraham to be fruitful, multiply, and reach their full number as a large nation. He led them through Moses and then Joshua to enter and subdue the land of Canaan.

Once again, the creation account of Gn 1 is a spiritual re-creation, stated in the terms of a physical creation. This creation is not limited to a specific generation. It is repeated over and over until all of Revelation is fulfilled. The process of creating heaven and earth takes six thousand years, which is likened unto six days. The re-creation of heaven and earth in Gn 1 is completed six thousand years later in Rv 21 (Rv 21:6).

vii. The seventh day—sabbath rest

✥ [1]The heavens and the earth were completed with everything that was in them. [2]By the seventh day God finished the work that he had been

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> doing, and he ceased on the seventh day all the work that he had been doing. [3]God blessed the seventh day and made it holy because on it he ceased all the work that he had been doing in creation. [4]This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created – when the Lord God made the earth and heavens. (Gn 2:1-4)

God finished the creation of heaven and earth on the sixth day. On the seventh day he rested and blessed all the things he had created (Gn 2:1-3). Genesis 1:1-2:3 is a record and summary of the process of creation.

Does this mean that God has been resting since he created Adam 6,000 years ago? No. In order to free mankind from sin, God has been continuously working since Adam sinned. This is according to the words of Jesus when he said, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working ... the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does," (Jn 5:17-19).

God is finally able to rest for eternity after capturing the devil that deceived Eve and throwing him into the lake of burning sulfur (Rv 20:10). This happens after God renews all of creation (Rv 21:5). Again, God rests after he judges and brings to an end the first heaven, first earth, and the sea in the end times. God rests after he descends (Rv 21:1-2) on his creation—the new heaven and new earth (Shincheonji). Regarding this, please refer to the section dealing with Rv 21 in "Part 3: A summary and explanation of Revelation."

Satan deceives all nations (Rv 18:23, 20:3) and corrupts all of God's creation into his own thoughts and ideologies. When all nations

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are healed, God restores everything the devil has contaminated back to its originally created form. At that time, we will enter the sabbath rest along with God. God's people will be able to live with their creator and receive from him the blessing promised for the seventh day (Gn 2:1-3). Eternal life is the blessing of all blessings. When God finally confers the blessing of eternal life, the old Korean saying rings true, "Send out the old year and bring in the blessed new year." The time of Satan's rule comes to an end, and a new era begins, an era in which God will live with man forever.

Paul told believers in the early church that God set a certain day for entering his sabbath rest because those who formerly had the gospel preached to them did not obey. For this reason, God's perfect rest remains for us (Heb 4:4-9). This rest, however, does not come for free. Rest comes to us when all things are recovered from the clutches of the devil back to their originally created form (Acts 3:21; Rv 11:15; 1 Cor 15:51-52).

Every time one generation goes and a new generation comes, re-creation takes place according to the process recorded in Gn 1. If God were able to complete his work with his original creation, why would the creation of a new heaven and a new earth be necessary? God's work of re-creation has continued until today because of man's disobedience. Today, we must not follow in the footsteps of all previous generations. Instead, we should obey God's word and try to enter his rest.

We at Shincheonji are creating heaven within ourselves by receiving the words Jesus sowed as a seed. We are becoming trees of life

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where the holy spirit can descend like a dove to rest for eternity (Mt 13:31-32). Jesus and his apostles shed their blood and died to achieve this purpose. God is still working to achieve this purpose. We should, therefore, also work in the harvest to complete this creation of heaven so that we may enter into God's rest with him. Amen.

viii. The conclusion of the creation of heaven and earth

The creation story in Genesis is a figurative, but logical account of the re-creation of heaven and earth. It describes how an old and obsolete generation is replaced through the work of the light. After the one and only God created the spiritual world, he created all things in the physical world. He then created man in his own image here on Earth. He gave to man all the things he created as an inheritance and entered into rest. That rest, however, was interrupted by Adam's sin. Until God recovers everything he created to its original form, he is repeatedly carrying out the work of re-creation.

God's creation is always accomplished in the order recorded in Gn 1. God creates a new world every time the world he created before betrays him and becomes corrupt. This process is clear in the worlds of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus.

The world before Jesus was created through the seed (i.e., physical lineage) of Adam, Noah, and Moses, but the world after Jesus is created through the seed of the holy spirit. Since Jesus' first coming,

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only those who are reborn through the seed of God and the holy spirit, regardless of their physical lineage, belong to God's family. They are the only ones allowed to enter his kingdom. People who merely believe in God, without being born again, will stand outside heaven and be considered gentiles.

The spiritual world begun by Jesus was created in both the physical and spiritual worlds. In the physical world, two worlds were created—Spiritual Israel and New Spiritual Israel. In the spiritual world, the holy city New Jerusalem was created. This city of New Jerusalem in the spiritual world will descend on and unite with the new heaven and new earth in the physical world when Rv 21 is fulfilled. This is how the work of re-creation, which has been continuing for 6,000 years, is finally completed. This is how the Garden of Eden is recovered and how God's eternal rest in paradise is accomplished. Amen.

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III. The process of the creation of heaven and earth

God gave us details about his creative process in advance through his prophecies, and we know that he will surely fulfill those prophecies (Am 3:7; Jn 14:29; Is 14:24). He gave us the Bible to let us know in advance what he was going to create, so that we will be able to believe when it appears.

God's creation is fulfilled in this order: (a) selection of a pastor, (b) creation of a kingdom, (c) establishment of a covenant with the chosen people, (d) betrayal of the covenant by the chosen people, (e) destruction of the chosen people by the gentiles, (f) selection of a new pastor, (g) judgment of the betrayers and the destroyers, (h) salvation, (i) creation of a new kingdom, (j) establishment of a new covenant and entering the sabbath rest.

God's will—his ultimate plan of salvation—is finally completed at the time of Revelation's fulfillment. Jesus is described as both the word present at the beginning and the way or path to life. This path of the word that began in Genesis ends in Revelation (Jn 1:1, 14:6). The work of God's creation is completed with the fulfillment of Revelation (Alpha and Omega—the beginning and the end; Rv 21:6).

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A. Selection of a pastor

i. Categories of pastors

Since the creation of God's kingdom and people begins with the selection of a pastor, let us categorize the types of pastors who belong to God.

(a) Pastors of prophecy

Pastors of prophecy speak about the future that God has shown them. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel are examples of prophets in the Old Testament; Apostle John is an example of a New Testament prophet.

(b) General pastors

General pastors testify about the work fulfilled by the promised pastor by proclaiming the gospel. Jesus' disciples, who testified about Jesus' work and proclaimed Jesus' words, are examples of general pastors. Most of the pastors in the last 2,000 years of Christian history belong in this category.

(c) Promised pastors

These pastors, promised in the Bible, are responsible for beginning a new generation of God's people. Promised pastors fulfill biblical prophecies and testify about the physical fulfillment. Jesus and the pastor who comes in the position of Apostle John in Revelation are representative promised pastors. When the promised pastor comes everyone must go to him to attain salvation. John

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the Baptist and the seven messengers of the church of the seven golden lampstands in the second coming are only the messengers who prepare the way. Salvation comes from the promised pastor who comes to the temple of the messenger who prepares the way.

Let us learn more about the pastor who comes according to Jesus' promises. This pastor carries out the work appointed to Apostle John in Revelation. He witnesses the events of Revelation in physical reality and listens to an angel explain them to him. He is the male child who will rule all nations after fighting and overcoming the enemies prophesied in Revelation (Rv 2, 3, 12). He receives the scroll opened by Jesus and teaches it to peoples, nations, languages, and kings (Rv 10). God, Jesus, and the spiritual kingdom descend on this pastor and work through him (Rv 3:12; Rv 21).

Throughout biblical history, the pastors who belong to God have been persecuted by the pastors who belong to the devil. This happens according to Gal 4:29, "The one born by natural descent persecuted the one born according to the Spirit." People who are ignorant of the Bible will actually believe what the persecutors are saying. True believers must distinguish these types of pastors using only the words of the Bible. When the appointed time arrives, when the promised pastor appears, everyone must go to him. This is the promise God has made with believers; this is true faith.

ii. Selection of a pastor

In every generation God always chooses one pastor to act as his light. God then creates everything else using his pastor as a pillar.

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In the time of Genesis, God created Adam and then God created the Garden of Eden, telling Adam to reign over all creation. When Adam's descendants became corrupt, God chose Noah from Adam's generation to start a new work. God chose Moses as a pastor to speak on his behalf so that he could fulfill the promise he made with Abraham. After Moses' death, God chose Joshua. After Joshua passed away, God chose the judges. While the kings were ruling over Israel, God sent the prophets, and Jesus' first coming occurred according to their prophecies. After Jesus ascended to heaven, God promised to send his next promised pastor and the spirit of truth.

(a) Adam—God's chosen pastor

1. Before humankind

❖ [5]Now no shrub of the field had yet grown on the earth, and no plant of the field had yet sprouted, for the Lord God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and there was no man to cultivate the ground. [6]Springs would well up from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground. (Gn 2:5-6)

Genesis 1 describes the six-day order in which creation took place. Genesis 2 describes Adam and the Garden of Eden. Are Gn 1 and 2 identical? If they are not identical, how are these two chapters related? Which chapter occurred first?

In Gn 1, God created animals and then man. According to Gn 2:19, however, "The Lord God formed out of the ground every living animal of the field and every bird of the air. He brought them to

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Adam." Although this seems to say that man was created before the animals, Gn 2:19 actually says that God brought the animals he had already created to Adam who was created afterwards. It does not mean God created Adam first and then created the animals. Thus, Gn 1 and 2 are in chronological order.

Genesis 2 specifies the creation of man out of all that had been created. The creation of man in Gn 2 is a more detailed account of the creative work that occurred on the sixth day in Gn 1. According to Gn 5:1-2, Adam and Eve were called humankind (male and female) when they were created on the sixth day of creation. Adam's world was created according to the process described in Gn 1, but the order of the process of creation described in Gn 1 applies to every generation. It is like a formula for all of God's creative work, not just the work in Adam's time.

If we think of Adam as the first man, then the history of humanity only goes back 6,000 years. Geologists and biologists, however, have discovered many fossilized remains from the past and have calculated that life has existed on Earth for far more than a billion years. Most scholars say that the Earth's first life forms existed about 3.8 billion years ago and that the first primitive humans existed roughly 5 million years ago.

If we understand Gn 2-3 literally, believing Adam to be the first human ever, all these scientific studies and the data that support them become some of the biggest lies in history. Archaeological evidence from ancient civilizations makes it very clear, however, that human civilization itself has a much longer history than the

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6,000 years of biblical history. If that is true, then how can we resolve this conflict between science and the words of the Bible? They are no longer in conflict if we accept that Adam was not the first human.

People who advocate evolution say that modern humans have evolved from ape-like ancestors. This is a hypothesis, and if it is true, then people should still be evolving today. God is the creator of heaven and earth, and he created each "kind" from the beginning (Gn 1:24). God also created humanity, but since the Bible does not say when he did it, we do not know the exact time. The Bible does, however, make it evident that Adam was not the first human. The paragraphs that follow summarize the biblical evidence for this fact.

First, according to Gn 4:13-17, Cain, who was Adam's first son, was afraid of some people he thought would try to kill him. It also says that Cain found a woman to marry.

- [13]Then Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is too great to endure! [14]Look! You are driving me off the land today, and I must hide from your presence. I will be a homeless wanderer on the earth; whoever finds me will kill me." [15]But the Lord said to him, "All right then, if anyone kills Cain, Cain will be avenged seven times as much." Then the Lord put a special mark on Cain so that no one who found him would strike him down. [16]So Cain went out from the presence of the Lord and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden. [17]Cain had marital relations with his wife, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Enoch. Cain was building a city, and he named the city after his son Enoch. (Gn 4:13-17)

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If Adam really was the first human, his son Cain was the third human, and Abel, Adam's second son, was the fourth. When Cain killed his brother Abel, God cast Cain out of his homeland. Cain's actions following his expulsion bring up several questions. Since Cain was afraid that people might kill him during his homeless wandering, God gave Cain a special mark indicating that no one should kill him. By God's grace, Cain was able to settle in the land of Nod, east of Eden. He was even able to marry and have children. If Adam really was the first human being, there should have only been three people left after Abel's death. In that case, who was Cain was afraid of? Who did Cain marry?

Some theologians say that the people Cain feared and the woman Cain married were also Adam's children. The Bible says, however, that Adam had another son, named Seth, after Cain killed Abel. It also says Adam had even more children after Seth (Gn 5:3-4). The name Seth means "God has given me another child in place of Abel because Cain killed him," (Gn 4:25). Since the other children Adam had in addition to Cain and Abel came after the birth of Seth, the people Cain feared and the woman Cain married must have existed before Adam.

❖ 3When Adam had lived 130 years he fathered a son in his own likeness, according to his image, and he named him Seth. 4The length of time Adam lived after he became the father of Seth was 800 years; during this time he had other sons and daughters. (Gn 5:3-4)

Second, the Bible implies that Adam had parents. God told Adam to leave his parents and unite with his wife (Gn 2:24). If Adam were

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really was the first human God created, how could he have had parents? Clearly, Adam was not the first human.

- That is why a man leaves his father and mother and unites with his wife, and they become a new family. (Gn 2:24)

Although there were people living before Adam, because God gave Adam the breath of life that made him a living being, God decided that Adam was the first "man". Anyone with a physical body that lacks God's breath of life is a mere lump of earth. He or she is not a man in God's eyes. The section labeled "2. The creation of Adam" will further explain the meaning of God's breath of life. Genesis 2:4-5 describes the situation that existed before the creation of man. The fact that no man had yet been created in this passage means God had not yet chosen a pastor. There was no spiritual farmer to cultivate the ground.

- [4]This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created – when the Lord God made the earth and heavens. [5]Now no shrub of the field had yet grown on the earth, and no plant of the field had yet sprouted, for the Lord God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and there was no man to cultivate the ground. [6]Springs would well up from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground. (Gn 2:4-6)

This passage refers to the time before God created Adam. The rain in this passage refers to God's word that comes down from heaven (Dt 32:1-2). The man or farmer who cultivates the ground is the pastor who cultivates (Mt 21:33-41; 1 Cor 9:9-10) the fields of

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people's hearts (1 Cor 3:9). The shrubs and plants are the physical bodies of believers (Is 40:6-7). The springs that well up from the earth are the opposite of the rain that falls from the sky. They are the teachings created by men of the dust. These words are taught by men who lack the breath of life. God only gave his word to Adam—not to anyone else. Thus, before Adam was created, the only words that existed were the thoughts and teachings of men; there was no truth on the earth.

2. The creation of Adam

"The Lord God formed the man from the soil of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being," (Gn 2:7). Since I explained why Adam was not the first human, it should now be clear that God chose Adam from among the many people God had created. He chose Adam and gave him the breath of life so that he could be with him. It is not worth obsessing over whether or not God used actual clay to form Adam. Remember 1 Tm 1:4, where Paul warns us not to occupy ourselves with "myths and interminable genealogies. Such things promote useless speculations rather than God's redemptive plan that operates by faith." While still in its mother's womb, a baby grows by deriving nutrients from its mother's body. Since the mother ultimately received those nutrients from the soil, although it did not happen directly, from this point of view, a man is formed from the soil.

What, then, is the breath of life that God gave to Adam? It is God's word. Anyone without God's word is merely flesh—a lump

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of clay—without a living spirit. This kind of person does not know God. Anyone who does not know God is like a beast (Ps 73:22; Prv 12:1, 30:2-3).

From this point of view, Adam was a true *man*. He was a living being, and because of this, Adam was the first man to be acknowledged by God. There were many people before Adam, but because they did not know God and they did not have God's word, they were considered beasts. From God's point of view, a man is someone who knows God and God's word. Anyone who does not know God and God's word is a beast. This is why Jesus was able to call himself "son of man."

- I was ignorant and lacked insight; I was as senseless as an animal before you. (Ps 73:22)

- [2]Surely I am more brutish than any other human being, and I do not have human understanding; [3]I have not learned wisdom, nor do I have knowledge of the Holy One. (Prv 30:2-3)

Since Adam became a spiritual being when he received the word of God, he was able to communicate with God. God's word was the food that gave life to Adam's spirit.

God decided that it was not good for Adam to be alone, so he made a woman from a part of Adam's rib (Gn 2:18, 2:21-23, 3:20). God also told Adam to leave his father and mother and unite with his wife in Gn 2:24. Just as Adam was not formed from real clay, Eve was not formed from Adam's rib. Adam's congregation members are symbolized by the parts of Adam's body. God chose a woman

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from among them, gave her to Adam, and the two became one. Since they were united in God's word, they did not reveal each other's faults. This is what Gn 2:25 means when it says that Adam and Eve were naked without being ashamed.

On the other hand, Gn 6:1-7 mentions the sons of God and the daughters of men. These sons of God are spiritual beings who, like Adam, have God's word and living spirit. The daughters of men are people without God's word or spirit. The sons of God in Gn 6 specifically refer to the children of Adam, including Seth (Gn 5:4). The daughters of men in Gn 6 are the people without God's spirit, which include the people Cain feared after killing Abel (Gn 4:14) and the woman Cain married (Gn 4:16-17). These people are indeed a part of God's creation, but they do not have God's breath of life. As mentioned previously, people who do not know God and his word are beasts.

Cain, who belonged to the evil one (1 Jn 3:12), decided to marry a woman. In the same way, the sons of God, who had living spirits, united with the daughters of men, who did not have living spirits. The children they bore were mere flesh; they did not have living spirits. When God's spirit left his people they went back to being mere flesh, and God limited their lifespan to 120 years (Gn 6:1-3).

✦ [1]Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, [2]that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose. [3]And the LORD said,

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"My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years." (Gn 6:1-3, NKJV)

(b) The selection of Noah after Adam

Noah was the son of Lamech and the 9th generation since Adam (Gn 5). Noah found favor in God's eyes and was saved when God sent the flood on Adam's descendants. The Bible says that Noah was blameless and walked with God (Gn 6:9).

Romans 3:10 laments that no one is righteous, not even one. How blameless must Noah have been that he could walk with God?

Noah was able to walk with God because, like Enoch before him, he always acted according to God's will. At the time of Noah, however, the rest of Adam's descendants took the daughters of men as their wives. They turned their back on God and acted according to their own wills. God looked at the world and saw only wickedness, corruption, and lawlessness (Gn 6:11-12). Remember that these daughters of men are those who do not know God—people without living spirits. The section entitled "(a) Adam—God's chosen pastor" under the heading "(ii) Selection of a pastor" contains a more detailed explanation regarding the daughters of men.

God said to Noah, "I have decided that all living creatures must die, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. Now I am about to destroy them and the earth," (Gn 6:13). Then God commanded Noah to build an ark to avoid the coming flood.

Noah built an ark that was big enough to accommodate two of every kind of creature, just as God commanded him. While Noah

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was building the ark, God waited patiently for people to listen to Noah and repent (1 Pt 3:20). The people, however, refused to listen or believe what Noah said. They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage up until the day Noah entered the ark. They had no idea what was about to happen to them until they were suddenly wiped out by the flood (Mt 24:38-39).

❖ By faith Noah, when he was warned about things not yet seen, with reverent regard, constructed an ark for the deliverance of his family. Through faith he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith. (Heb 11:7)

Today, we must understand the events of Noah's time as warnings and examples, because the events of the second coming of Jesus are similar to what happened in the days of Noah (Mt 24:37-39). At the second coming of our Lord, one pastor, who comes in the position of Apostle John in Revelation, sends letters on behalf of Jesus asking the seven messengers of the church of the seven golden lampstands to repent. He also receives God's book in order to prophesy again and teach the words that are written in it. At that time, those who listen to and obey the words of God spoken by this one pastor, will repent and attain salvation just like Noah's family did. You can read more about this in part three of this book, which is an explanation and summary of Revelation.

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(c) The selection of Abraham after Noah

God chose Abraham when Noah's world became corrupt just like Adam's world. Abraham was a light that God found within Noah's corrupt world.

Abraham is the descendant of Noah's oldest son Shem that we know as the "father of faith." Abraham's ancestors—the descendants of Shem—lived across the Euphrates River and worshiped other gods (Jo 24:2-3).

One day while Abraham was living in Ur of the Chaldeans, God told him, "Go out from your country, your relatives, and your father's household to the land that I will show you," (Gn 12:1). God also said, "Then I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you, and I will make your name great, so that you will exemplify divine blessing. I will bless those who bless you, but the one who treats you lightly I must curse, and all the families of the earth will bless one another by your name," (Gn 12:2-3).

Ur of the Chaldeans was located near the ends of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. It was an ancient city located in what is now southern Iraq. Since God did not tell Abraham where he was going before he left Ur, Abraham had no destination when he set out on his journey. God only told Abraham to go to the land he would reveal (Gn 12:1). Despite having no idea where he was headed, Abraham left his home to follow the call of God (Heb 11:8).

Abraham left his hometown with his father Terah, his wife Sarai, and his nephew Lot. They reached Haran (a town located in what is now southeastern Turkey) and briefly stayed there. Abraham's

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father Terah died in Haran (Gn 11:31-32). Abraham then left Haran and entered the land of Canaan with Sarai and Lot. Abraham built an altar there and worshiped God (Gn 12:7-8).

God changed Abram's name to Abraham, which means *father of all nations*. God also changed Sarai's name to Sarah, which means *mother of all nations* (Gn 17:5, 15). God did not give Sarah a child until Abraham was 100 years old, but Abraham maintained faith in God's promise to make him into a great nation (Gn 12:2). Abraham never had any doubt. He did not lose faith even though he knew Sarah was too old to have a baby and he considered his own body to be near death (Rom 4:19). Abraham finally had his son Isaac at the age of 100 (Gn 21:5), but offered him as a sacrifice by faith in obedience to God (Gn 22:2-10; Heb 11:17).

It was by faith that Abraham left his home without knowing his destination; it was by faith that Abraham waited patiently for the birth of his son Isaac, whom he offered up in sacrifice to God. Faith is assurance that what God has promised will be fulfilled even when it seems impossible (Heb 11:1; Rom 4:18). God saw Abraham's faith and considered him righteous (Gn 15:6; Gal 3:6). That is what made Abraham the father of faith (Rom 4:16-18).

(d) The selection of Moses after Abraham

Abraham's grandson Jacob fled to Egypt with 70 members of his extended family to escape a severe famine. Over the next 400 years in Egypt Jacob's descendants grew to become a nation. Pharaoh, the Egyptian king, was concerned when he realized how fast the Hebrews were growing, so he decided to enslave them.

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Their enslavement did nothing to slow the Hebrew people's steady population growth. Because the Egyptians feared the Hebrew's steadily growing population, they began to treat them more brutally. Pharaoh was merciless in delivering punishments. He even commanded the Hebrew midwives to kill every male Hebrew child as soon as he was born. The midwives, however, feared God and refused to obey Pharaoh's command. As a result, Pharaoh commanded all Egyptians to throw male Hebrew infants into the river.

Around that time, Jochebed, wife of Amram and a descendant of Levi, gave birth to Moses (Ex 2:1-10, 6:20). She saw that her baby was healthy, so she hid him for three months. When she could no longer conceal him, she placed him in a papyrus basket and set it among the reeds in the river.

At that time, the Egyptian princess (Pharaoh's daughter) came down to the river to wash and found the basket containing the baby boy. Miriam, who was the boy's sister, was with the princess and suggested that the princess hire the Hebrew woman Jochebed to nurse the baby. The princess agreed, took the boy in as her own son, and decided to name him "Moses" because he was drawn from the water. Moses was trained according to all the teachings of the Egyptians and was powerful in his words and deeds (Acts 7:21-22).

When Moses reached the age of 40, he went to visit the Hebrews. He saw an Egyptian hurting his fellow Hebrew and killed the Egyptian in the Hebrew's defense. When this was revealed, Moses fled to the land of Midian because the Egyptian king was trying to kill him. There Moses married Zipporah, the daughter of Reuel

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(a priest of Midian). Moses and Zipporah lived together at his father-in-law's house for 40 years (Ex 2:11-22; Acts 7:23-30).

Back in Egypt, God heard the voice of the Israelites calling out for deliverance from their suffering and slavery. God decided to care for the Israelites and fulfill the covenant he made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. This was the covenant God made with Abraham:

- [13]Then the Lord said to Abram, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a foreign country. They will be enslaved and oppressed for four hundred years. [14]But I will execute judgment on the nation that they will serve. Afterward they will come out with many possessions." (Gn 15:13-14)

Abraham's descendants had long-served the Egyptian kings. It was finally time for God to deliver his chosen people and judge Egypt as he had promised.

One day, as Moses was tending his flock on Mt. Horeb, an angel of the Lord appeared in a flame from within a bush. God told Moses, "I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt," (Ex 3:10).

Moses, however, could not answer God very easily. God introduced himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who were all Moses' ancestors. In addition, God gave Moses the authority and the power to turn his staff into a serpent, to heal leprosy, and to turn water into blood so that the people would believe he was sent by God.

When Moses refused by saying, "I am not an eloquent man," God sent Moses his brother Aaron because he was a good speaker

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(Ex 4:10-14). Then God said to Moses, "So you are to speak to him and put the words in his mouth ... it will be as if he were your mouth and as if you were his God," (Ex 4:15-16). Moses spoke God's word to Aaron on behalf of God, and in turn, Aaron spoke to the people.

When Moses returned to Egypt, Pharaoh did not send the people easily, just as God prophesied. For this reason, God sent ten types of plagues upon Egypt through the work of Moses. The tenth plague was the death of every firstborn son in Egypt. When Pharaoh saw that all the firstborn sons of Egypt were dead, he finally allowed the Israelites to leave.

The Israelites then followed Moses out of Egypt, crossing the Red Sea and the desert. They had been in Egypt for 400 years but were finally returning to the land of Canaan where their forefather Abraham used to live.

There were 600,000 men that came out of Egypt. Imagine what they went through as they wandered the desert for 40 years! When the Israelites did not have enough food, some even complained that it would have been better if they had stayed in Egypt (Nm 11:4-6, 14:3, 20:5). Moses also faced many difficulties in trying to lead the quarrelsome Israelites. Many of his hardships are summarized in the following passage:

- [11]And Moses said to the Lord, "Why have you afflicted your servant? Why have I not found favor in your sight, that you lay the burden of this entire people on me? [12]Did I conceive this entire people? Did I give birth to them, that you should say to me, 'Carry them in your arms, as a foster father bears a nursing child,' to the land which you

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swore to their fathers? [13]From where shall I get meat to give to this entire people, for they cry to me, 'Give us meat, that we may eat!' [14]I am not able to bear this entire people alone, because it is too heavy for me! [15]But if you are going to deal with me like this, then kill me immediately. If I have found favor in your sight then do not let me see my trouble." (Nm 11:11-15)

Therefore, God appointed the governors to support Moses and reduce his burden. God also provided everything the Israelites needed in the desert (Dt 2:7). God provided a pillar of cloud during the day to shade the Israelites as they walked under the scorching desert sun. God protected and led the Israelites with a pillar of fire at night (Nm 14:14). God rained down manna and quail from heaven. He gave them water from the rocks. Their clothes and shoes never wore out (Ex 16:12-15, 31; Dt 8:3-4, 29:5). God provided manna for them up to the point when they were able to produce their own crops in the land of Canaan (Jo 5:10-12).

(e) The selection of Joshua after Moses

Joshua, whose given name was Hoshea, was the son of Nun from the tribe of Ephraim (Nm 13:16, 14:30). He acted as Moses' aide (Ex 17:8-16) and was chosen as a spy to explore the land of Canaan (Nm 13:1-16). He was chosen by God to succeed Moses (Nm 27:18-23), and after Moses' death, it was Joshua who led the Israelites to conquer the land of Canaan so that it could be distributed to the twelve tribes. The faith and courage that Joshua

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demonstrated in spying on Canaan is a good example for everyone. Let us find out more about the situation Joshua faced at that time.

Many Israelites came to Moses asking about the land of Canaan where they were headed (Dt 1:21-22). God commanded Moses to send the twelve heads of the twelve tribes to spy on the land of Canaan in order to satisfy the curiosity of the people (Nm 13:1-2). The twelve leaders went to spy for 40 days, but when they returned, they had two different reports. With the exception of Joshua and Caleb, the ten remaining tribe leaders reported that conquering the land of Canaan would be impossible.

> ✥ 31But the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against these people, because they are stronger than we are!" 32Then they presented the Israelites with a discouraging report of the land they had investigated, saying, "The land that we passed through to investigate is a land that devours its inhabitants. All the people we saw there are of great stature. 33We even saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak came from the Nephilim), and we seemed liked grasshoppers both to ourselves and to them." (Nm 13:31-33)

When the Israelites heard the report, they cried all night complaining to Moses and Aaron. They even questioned whether or not it would be better to return to Egypt (Nm 14:1-3). God sent Abraham's descendants to Egypt for 400 years so that he could save them in fulfillment of the covenant he made with Abraham. Everything God had done for his people was about to go to waste because of their unbelieving hearts. Moses' heart must have been crushed.

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This is when Joshua and Caleb argued against the other ten tribe leaders and their people.

- Only do not rebel against the Lord, and do not fear the people of the land, for they are bread for us. Their protection has turned aside from them, but the Lord is with us. Do not fear them! (Nm 14:9)

This was the opposite of what the other tribe heads had said. The two groups saw the same situation, but came to totally different conclusions depending on whether they saw the situation through the eyes of faith or the eyes of doubt.

In Nm 14:26-38, God judged everyone over the age of 20 because they did not believe God's promise. Instead they agreed with the ten tribe leaders who said conquering Canaan was impossible, and they complained to Moses and Aaron. These people who complained were forced to wander the desert for 40 years—one year for every day they spied on the land of Canaan. Ultimately, these grumbling Israelites died before reaching their final destination. It was only the second generation, the children of the Israelites who came out of Egypt, that were allowed to enter the land of Canaan. God then commanded Joshua and charged him with conquering the land of Canaan after Moses' death.

- [2]Moses my servant is dead. Get ready! Cross the Jordan River! Lead these people into the land which I am ready to hand over to them. [3]I am handing over to you every place you set foot, as I promised Moses. [4]Your territory will extend from the wilderness in the south to Lebanon in the north. It will extend all the way to the great River

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Euphrates in the east (including all of Syria) and all the way to the Mediterranean Sea in the west. (Jo 1:2-4)

- Be strong and courageous, for you will take the Israelites to the land I have promised them, and I will be with you. (Dt 31:23)

Joshua conquered the land of Canaan and accomplished his great mission. He died at the age of 110 and was buried in Timnath Serah in the hill country of Ephraim (Jo 24:29-30).

(f) The selection of Jesus after Joshua

God watched the Israelites, whom Moses had delivered out of Egypt, continually breaking his commandments and becoming more and more corrupt. In response, God promised that he would send them a savior—Jesus Christ, who came to Israel 2,000 years ago.

1. Jesus was born of the seed of the holy spirit

Jesus Christ was born of the blood of Abraham and in the lineage of David. Jesus, however, was conceived by the spirit in the body of a virgin. For this reason, Jesus is the son of God and not the son of an ordinary man; he was born of God's seed. Mary had not yet been with any man when she conceived Jesus (Lk 1:34), and she did not consummate her marriage with Joseph until after she had given birth (Mt 1:18, 25).

The angel Gabriel visited Mary and told her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the child to be born will be holy; he will be called

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the Son of God," (Lk 1:35). Before the child was even born he had already been given the name Jesus (Lk 1:31).

The following scriptures will help us understand the mystery of Jesus' birth and the reason he is the son of God (Mt 1:1-21; Lk 1:26-35; Jn 1:32-34).

- [1]This is the record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham ... [17]So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to Christ, fourteen generations. [18]Now the birth of Jesus Christ happened this way. While his mother Mary was engaged to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. [19]Because Joseph, her husband to be, was a righteous man, and because he did not want to disgrace her, he intended to divorce her privately. [20]When he had contemplated this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. [21]She will give birth to a son and you will name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." (Mt 1:1-21)

- [26]In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, [27]to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, a descendant of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. [28]The angel came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one, the Lord is with you!" [29]But she was greatly troubled

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by his words and began to wonder about the meaning of this greeting. [30]So the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God! [31]Listen: You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. [32]He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. [33]He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will never end." [34]Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I have not had sexual relations with a man?" [35]The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called the Son of God. (Lk 1:26-35)

- [32]Then John testified, "I saw the Spirit descending like a dove from heaven, and it remained on him. [33]And I did not recognize him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'The one on whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining – this is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' [34]I have both seen and testified that this man is the Chosen One of God." (Jn 1:32-34)

2. Prophecies and fulfillment related to Jesus Christ

The following list of scriptures pairs prophecies about Jesus with their fulfillment, proving that Jesus was the Messiah that God promised.

- He was born to a virgin. Is 7:14 ▻ Mt 1:18-23; Lk 1:26-31
- He was born of the line of David. Jer 23:5 ▻ Acts 13:22-23
- He was born in Bethlehem. Mi 5:2-4 ▻ Lk 2:4-11

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- He came out of Egypt. Hos 11:1 ▻ Mt 2:14-15
- He began his ministry in Galilee. Is 9:1-2 ▻ Mt 4:12-16
- He sowed the seed of man. Jer 31:27 ▻ Mt 13:24, 37
- He spoke about ancient mysteries in parables. Ps 78:1-4 ▻ Mt 13:34-35
- He made the new covenant with God's people. Jer 31:31 ▻ Mt 26:27-28; Lk 22:20
- He was the stone the builders rejected that became the cornerstone. Ps 118:22-23 ▻ Mt 21:42-43; Acts 4:11-12
- He entered the city of Jerusalem riding a young donkey. Zec 9:9 ▻ Mt 21:1-5; Jn 12:14-16
- He was betrayed by someone with whom he shared his meals. Ps 41:9 ▻ Jn 13:18
- People cast lots for his clothes. Ps 22:18 ▻ Jn 19:23-24
- He was given wine vinegar to drink. Ps 69:21 ▻ Jn 19:28-30; Mt 27:34, 48

After all these things happened, Jesus died on the cross and resurrected after three days. He stayed for 40 more days before ascending to heaven (1 Cor 15:1-8; Acts 1:3). In addition to these specific prophecies and their fulfillment, the rest of the acts Jesus performed in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies are recorded in detail in the four gospels.

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(g) The advocate and the promised one who overcomes

Before he ascended to heaven Jesus promised that he would send the spirit of truth, the advocate. After Jesus ascended to heaven, he showed Apostle John a revelation in a vision, and Apostle John wrote that revelation in a book. John's book of Revelation says that Jesus will give all of his power and authority to the one who fights and overcomes the Nicolaitans—the group of Satan (Rv 2-3).

1. The advocate

The advocate is a teacher who protects with grace[5]. According to this definition, the advocate, who speaks on behalf of God, could refer to either a spirit or a physical pastor with flesh just like our own. Since, however, the advocate is also referred to as the spirit of truth, it refers to a spirit and not a physical being.

Jesus, who came in the flesh, was also described as an advocate (1 Jn 2:1), because he taught his father's words on God's behalf and because he protected with grace (Jn 14:24-26). Jesus said, "The words that I say to you, I do not speak on my own initiative, but the Father residing in me performs his miraculous deeds," (Jn 14:10). Thus, Jesus was the advocate who came in the name of God (Jn 5:43).

The second advocate—the spirit that comes in the name of Jesus—will reside in a man and speak on Jesus' behalf through that

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5 – The three Chinese characters that make up the Korean word *boehyesa* (보혜사 or 保惠師) mean *to protect*, *grace*, and *teacher*, respectively. Thus, this word, which is usually translated "counselor" or "advocate" in English, means *a teacher who protects with grace*.

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man's lips (Jn 14:16-17, 26). The spirit of truth comes in Jesus' name and speaks the words of Jesus on Jesus' behalf. The promised pastor speaks the words of the spirit of truth on its behalf (Rv 19:10).

Apostle John receives the explanation of the entire book of Revelation from the spirit of prophecy[6] (Rv 19:10) and then testifies "to everything that he saw concerning the Word of God and the testimony about Jesus Christ," (Rv 1:2). God gives the revelation to Jesus, Jesus gives it to his angel, his angel gives it to John, and John proclaims it to the servants of Jesus (Rv 1:1). Jesus also said, "Everything that the Father has is mine; that is why I said the Spirit of truth will receive from me what is mine and will tell it to you," (Jn 16:13-15).

Thus, the mission of the spirit of truth (i.e., the advocate) is to speak Jesus' words on behalf of Jesus through the lips of the promised pastor. Jesus said, "You will know at that time that I am in my Father and you are in me and I am in you," (Jn 14:20). He also said, "If anyone hears my voice and opens the door I will come into his home and share a meal with him, and he with me," (Rv 3:20). According to these words, the spirit of truth, the advocate, enters a man and works through that man.

2. The one who overcomes, the kingdom of heaven, and eternal life (Rv 2, 3, 12, 15, 21)

We believers have an enemy to overcome, but it is not an enemy of flesh and blood. Our enemy is an evil spirit, the devil (Eph 6:12).

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6 – The Korean Bible uses the term *daeyeonae young* (대언의 영), which means *spirit who speaks on behalf.*

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In his first coming, Jesus fought against the devil and overcame him (Mt 4:1-11; Jn 16:33). After Jesus ascended to heaven he appeared to Apostle John on the Island of Patmos in a vision and told him to fight against the Nicolaitans and overcome. Jesus promised that the one who overcomes will receive many blessings (Rv 2-3).

- The one who overcomes will receive the fruit from the tree of life and the crown of life. He will not be harmed by the second death. He will receive the hidden manna, the white stone, and the iron scepter with which he will rule all nations. He will receive the morning star, and will be clothed in a white robe. His name will be written in the book of life, and he will be made a pillar in God's temple. He will have God's name, Jesus' new name, and the name of the holy city New Jerusalem written on him. He will also sit with Jesus on his throne.

Revelation 21:7 summarizes these blessings when it says the one who overcomes will become God's son and receive God's inheritance.

In Rv 2, Jesus commands people to fight against and overcome the Nicolaitans, who belong to Satan. In Rv 12 and 13, they are described as the beast with the seven heads and ten horns, which receives the authority of the dragon. In Rv 15:2, they are called the beast, his image, and the number of his name.

Since Jacob fought the angel whom God had sent and overcame him near the river Jabbok (Gn 32:22-28), God blessed Jacob with a new name—*Israel*. The one who overcomes the Nicolaitans also receives the new name of *Israel*, which in Hebrew actually

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means *one who overcomes*. Since they were able to overcome, Jacob founded Physical Israel and Jesus founded Spiritual Israel. The one who overcomes at the time of Revelation's fulfillment establishes New Spiritual Israel. God was with Jacob because he overcame. God was with Jesus because he overcame. In the same way, God will be with the one who overcomes, who is promised in Revelation.

Is it easy to fight and overcome Satan, who has been the ruler of the kingdom of the air (Eph 2:2) for 6,000 years? Revelation 12:11 says that the male child who will rule all nations along with his brothers must fight and overcome the dragon without showing concern for their own lives.

At the end of the age, believers must find the promised pastor, the one who overcomes, in order to attain eternal life and enter the kingdom of heaven. God and Jesus are with the one who overcomes and his temple. Therefore, all nations must go and worship there.

❧ The weapons with which we fight

Since the enemies we must fight are evil spirits, physical weapons will not work. The only weapon that can be used to fight against Satan is the word—the full armor of God (Eph 6:10-13).

The devil challenged Jesus by twisting the meaning of the scriptures, but Jesus was still able to overcome him (Mt 4:1-11). The scribes and Pharisees also tried to provoke Jesus by discussing the law. Jesus was also able to overcome them with God's word. In the last days, the male child, who will rule all nations, fights along with his brothers and overcomes the dragon and the Nicolaitans using the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony (Rv 12:11).

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God's word is the only weapon that can overcome evil spirits. Most importantly, believers in the last days must understand what God's word says about the Nicolaitans in order to defeat them. This knowledge about the identity of the Nicolaitans will become a weapon that allows its possessors to defeat them. According to Rv 2-3, the Nicolaitans are the group of Satan that enters the church of the seven golden lampstands and feeds its congregation members food that has been sacrificed to idols. They also teach them their doctrines and force them to commit sexual immorality.

To help people overcome, Paul warned, "Stand firm by fastening the belt of truth around your waist, by putting on the breastplate of righteousness, by fitting your feet with the preparation that comes from the good news of peace, and in all of this, by taking up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God," (Eph 6:14-17). This is the full armor of God. Believers who believe God's prophecies and promises must prepare the full armor of God in order that they may be ready when Satan attempts to deceive them.

❧ The battlefield

Jesus commands his people to overcome Satan's Nicolaitans. The Nicolaitans appear and invade the church of the seven golden lampstands, which is also the location of the seven messengers (Rv 1-3). Therefore, anyone who wants to fight and overcome the Nicolaitans must first find the church where they are located. One must know the identity of the seven stars in order to find their

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church. Stars can be found in the heavens, but we know these seven stars are in the church of the seven golden lampstands. That is why this church is referred to as heaven in Rv 13:6. Jesus tells us that the seven stars are seven angels or messengers (Rv 1:20).

Only the one who comes in the position of Apostle John knows the true identity of these seven stars (angels), the real location of the church of the seven golden lampstands, and the true identity of the Nicolaitans. He knows the secrets of the seven stars and the church of the seven golden lampstands and the truth about the Nicolaitans because Jesus has shown and explained everything to him alone. This is why, in order to find the Nicolaitans, we must first meet the pastor who comes in the position of Apostle John.

Just as the Old Testament promises Jesus Christ (Jn 5:39), the New Testament prophesies about this promised pastor. The Old Testament prophesies the birth and life of Jesus. The New Testament describes the way the promised pastor will appear and the work that he will accomplish. All those who believe and study the scriptures can find the promised pastor.

❧ The characters that appear

The spirit of Jesus, Apostle John who speaks on behalf of Jesus, Satan's Nicolaitans, and the seven messengers who prepare the way

❧ The order of their appearance

The seven messengers, the Nicolaitans, the spirit of Jesus, Apostle John

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The betrayers = the seven messengers; the destroyers = Satan's Nicolaitans; the saviors = Jesus and the one who overcomes

❧ Evidence for the one who overcomes and the one who is defeated

Revelation is about two wars: the war between the seven stars and the Nicolaitans and the war between the Nicolaitans and the male child who will rule all nations. They fight spiritual battles using the words of their testimonies. In the end, the seven stars are defeated by the Nicolaitans and they scatter in seven directions. In the second war, however, the Nicolaitans are defeated by the male child who will rule all nations (i.e., the savior and the one who overcomes), along with his brothers, and it is the Nicolaitans who are scattered in seven directions.

According to God's word, those who are defeated flee in seven directions (Dt 28:25). They become the tail of the victor (Dt 28:44). The people of the tabernacle of the seven stars become the tail of the Nicolaitans (i.e., the beast with seven heads and ten horns) and worship them (Rv 13). Later, however, the beast is thrown out of the tabernacle of heaven by the male child who will rule all nations (Rv 12:7-11).

On the other hand, the one who defeats the beast with the seven heads and ten horns receives the new name *Israel*, which means *one who overcomes*. He becomes Israel and creates the twelve tribes. Each tribe is made up of 12,000 people that have received the seal of God. These twelve tribes become New Spiritual Israel. These 144,000 people become God's kingdom and priests

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(Rv 5:9-10, 7:4, 20:4-6). Everything you have read thus far is the testimony about the one who overcomes, the promised pastor who is chosen in the last days to complete the 6,000 years of God's work and fulfill the 66 books of the Bible.

This section, which deals with the selection of God's pastor, can be summarized as follows: God has chosen a single pastor in every generation of the last 6,000 years of biblical history, from the time of Adam until today.

B. Creation of a kingdom

In the 6,000 years of biblical history, God's re-creation takes place at a different location in every generation. In Adam's time, it was the Garden of Eden; in Noah's time, it was Mt. Ararat; in Abraham's time, it was the land of Shechem; in Jesus' time, it was the area surrounding the Sea of Galilee.

At the time of Jesus' first coming, God began sowing the seed of the gospel to the entire world. At the time of the second coming, God harvests believers who, through that seed, have been transformed into good grain. God makes these believers his newly chosen people and creates a new kingdom through them. The events of this re-creation occur in the same place as the appearance of the one who overcomes, who is promised in Rv 2 and 3. That place is Mt. Zion (Rv 14)—the new heaven and new earth, which is Shincheonji (Rv 21). Since today is the time of the second coming, all believers must search for Mt. Zion, Shincheonji, where the promised pastor (i.e., the one who overcomes) can be found.

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Let us first understand the creation of Adam's world.

i. The creation of Adam's world

After he formed Adam, God made the Garden of Eden in the east. The Garden of Eden contained the tree of life, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, a river that separated into four headwaters, and the serpent.

(a) The Garden of Eden

Where was the Garden of Eden that God created in the east after creating Adam (Gn 2:8)?

The four rivers flowing out from the Garden of Eden are the Pishon, the Gihon, the Hiddekel[7], and the Euphrates. Although the Hiddekel and the Euphrates are located near the Persian Gulf between modern-day Saudi Arabia and Iran, the location of the Pishon and Gihon rivers is still unknown. The fact that the Garden of Eden God made for Adam was the first tabernacle of God's chosen people, however, is much more important than its physical location. The Garden of Eden has a much deeper spiritual meaning.

When mountains appear figuratively in the Bible they symbolize organizations where people gather (Rv 17:9). The Garden of Eden[8] also symbolizes an organization comprised of people. The trees in the Garden of Eden represent people. Recognizing what the tree

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7 – The Korean Bible uses the ancient Hebrew name for the Tigris River—*Hiddekel*.

8 – The Korean Bible uses the word *dongsan* (동산) for the word garden. *Dongsan* literally means *hill*.

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of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil represent makes it easier to understand what kind of place the Garden of Eden really was. The tree of life will be explained in the next section entitled "The tree of life and the fruit that grants eternal life to those who eat it." The tree of the knowledge of good and evil will be explained in the section entitled "The tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the fruit of which leads to death."

(b) The tree of life and the fruit that grants eternal life to those who eat it

God said that eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil brings death (Gn 2:17) and that eating from the tree of life and its fruit brings eternal life (Gn 3:22). Despite the fact, however, that all people have continuously sought eternal life, they have died in anguish because of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If Adam and Eve had not eaten the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, or if the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil never existed, humans would never have been imprisoned by sin and death. Believers have long been searching for the fruit of the tree of life that they might throw off the yoke of death. It is even recognized and has been sought by non-believers as an elixir of immortality[9].

Although this has been one of humanity's biggest questions for a long time, no one has been able to determine exactly what

9 – The Korean word for elixir for immortality is *bullocho* (불로초). The first Chinese emperor, Qin Shi Huang, often sent his ministers on ultimately futile quests for this elixir of immortality.

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these two kinds of trees and their fruit represent. If these two kinds of trees from the Garden of Eden were real physical trees, they would have disappeared in Noah's flood. If they did disappear in Noah's time, why do they reappear in the four gospels (Mt 13; Jn 15; Mt 26:29; Mk 14:25; Lk 22:18) and in Rv 18 and 22? People who understand Revelation know the identity of these two kinds of trees. Theologians and pastors fulfill their responsibilities only when they feed their congregation members the fruit of the tree of life and protect them from the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

First, we will discuss the tree of life and its fruit.

According to the book of Proverbs, "[Wisdom] is like a tree of life to those who obtain her," (Prv 3:18), and "The fruit of the righteous is like a tree of life," (Prv 11:30). These passages make it clear that the tree of life is a person who has become wise and righteous through God's word of life.

The secrets that have been hidden since the creation of the world, however, are only made known when the parables God used to hide them are explained (Ps 78:1-2; Mt 13:34-35). God uses trees figuratively to refer to his chosen people (Is 5:7; Jer 5:14). Jesus referred to people born again through the seed of God's word (Lk 8:11) as trees and as the kingdom of heaven (Mt 13:31-32). If God's word is a seed, then that seed is the seed of life. The tree that grows from this seed of life must be the tree of life. Since Jesus called himself the way, the truth, the life (Jn 14:6), and also the true vine (Jn 15:1, 5), Jesus is the physical fulfillment of the tree of life.

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If the tree of life is a person, then the fruit of the tree of life cannot be literal fruit. James wrote, "By his [God's] sovereign plan he gave us birth through the message of truth, that we would be a kind of firstfruits of all he created," (Jas 1:18). Simply speaking, James compares people to fruit.

The fruit of the tree of life are the words of God and Jesus that come out of the mouth of God's true pastor. These fruit also refer to the believers who follow the true pastor. Jesus, because he was the tree of life, declared that people could only have eternal life by eating his flesh (Jn 6).

The tree of life in the Garden of Eden refers both to Adam, who received God's word, and to believers who listened to the word from Adam. God said to Adam, "You may freely eat fruit from any tree in the garden," (Gn 2:16). The fruit of every kind of tree in the garden refer to the believers who belonged to Adam. This means that God allowed Adam to give and receive words from anyone who had received the same word Adam had received from God.

At the second coming, the tree of life is located in New Jerusalem. According to Rv 22:1-2, the tree of life—located on both sides of the river of the water of life flowing from the throne—bears twelve kinds of fruit every month. This passage also says the leaves of the tree of life are for the healing of the nations.

Since, like Jesus, the tree of life is God's true pastor, the people that belong to the true pastor are the branches, leaves, and fruit of the tree of life. According to Rv 14:1-4, the 144,000 gathered at Mt. Zion are called firstfruits. These are the priests of the twelve

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tribes of New Spiritual Israel, which is created in the last days; they are the physical fulfillment of the fruit of the tree of life. The leaves of the tree of life, which are for the healing of the nations, are the evangelists who renew the world through God's word.

Because the tree of life in the spiritual world descends on and unites with Shincheonji (Rv 21:1-2), all nations must find Shincheonji to obtain healing and eternal life. Anyone who asks and seeks (Mt 7:7-8) will find and be able to eat Shincheonji's fruit of the tree of life. This fruit of the tree of life can only be eaten at the time of the second coming. On the night of the Passover, before Jesus was crucified, he made the new covenant through his blood, declaring to his disciples, "I tell you, from now on I will not drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it anew with you in my Father's kingdom," (Mt 26:29; Lk 22:18). This vine refers to Jesus, and the fruit it bears refers to his flesh and blood. His flesh and blood are spiritual food. They are the words of life. When Jesus said he would drink it anew he meant that he would eat the fulfillment of the promises in the New Testament as a new type of food. At the time of the first coming, the spiritual food that Jesus fed people was the fulfillment of the Old Testament.

(c) The fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil that leads to death

What is the true identity of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which has imprisoned all of humanity in sin? Who planted the tree of the knowledge of good and evil that is the source of death and curses? Why would people surely die after eating its fruit?

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Humanity has been under death and has born the yoke of sin ever since the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was eaten. This was why Jesus had to come and bear the cross to free humanity from its yoke of sin and death (Heb 10:11-14).

Let us understand the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which is the root of all sin. God did not plant the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Its appearance is directly related to the appearance of Satan, which is covered in the section entitled "iii. Dividing the spiritual and physical worlds in two" under the heading "A. Creation of the spiritual and physical worlds."

Satan, more than anyone else, knows that God wants to be glorified by and live with the people he has created. Satan has sown his own thoughts into people's hearts to control them and to receive all the glory that should belong to God. The thoughts and words of Satan are Satan's seed. God created the Garden of Eden and sowed life—that is, God's word—into Adam's spirit. The serpent Satan deceived Adam and Eve making them eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In other words, the serpent forced them to receive his thoughts and words.

According to the parable in Mt 13:24-30, the enemy (i.e., the devil) sows weeds in the same field where a man (i.e., Jesus) sows the good seed. Similarly, God's seed and Satan's seed were both sown within the same field, the Garden of Eden. As these two kinds of seed grew, one became the tree of life and the other became the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The tree of life grew from

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the seed God sowed, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil grew from the seed the devil sowed.

Jesus said, "It is written, 'Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God,'" (Mt 4:4). Although God's words are the fruit of the tree of life that give life to our spirits, Satan's words are the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

The fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is, according to its name, doctrine that is a mixture of good and evil. Since the words of God and the words of Satan both come from the same mouth, untrained people find it difficult to distinguish them. When Eve saw the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, not only did it look good for food and appealing to her eyes, the Bible says she thought the fruit would make her wise (Gn 3:6). In fact, the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil can look more like the fruit of the tree of life than the fruit of the tree of life itself. Since the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil looked good to her, Eve believed the words of the serpent when he said, "When you eat of it, you surely will not die. You will become like God." God judged and punished Adam and Eve, because they were deceived. God also judged and punished the serpent, who deceived them (Gn 3:14-19).

Daniel 4 compares King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, the nation of evil spirits, to a tree. Nebuchadnezzar was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The prophet Daniel heard God's explanation of what Nebuchadnezzar dreamed and said, "The tree that you

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saw that grew large and strong, whose top reached to the sky, and which could be seen in all the land, whose foliage was attractive and its fruit plentiful, and from which there was food available for all, under whose branches wild animals used to live, and in whose branches birds of the sky used to nest—it is you, O king," (Dn 4:20-22). Based on this description of its external appearance, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is very impressive when it is compared to other trees. Thus, the description written in Gn 3:6—that the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil was "good for food, was attractive to the eye, and was desirable for making one wise"—is surely not an overstatement.

Jesus said, "I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me—and I in him—bears much fruit," (Jn 15:5). If King Nebuchadnezzar is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, then the people under his rule are its branches, leaves, and fruit. The birds that nest in the tree of the knowledge of good and evil symbolize evil spirits. The holy spirit nests in the tree of life born from the seed of the holy spirit, and evil spirits nest in the tree born from the seed of evil spirits.

The prophecy of Jeremiah (Jer 31:27) was fulfilled 2,000 years ago when Satan sowed the seed of the weeds in the same field where Jesus had sown the good seed (Mt 13:24-30). At the time of Revelation's fulfillment, the Nicolaitans—through whom Satan works—forced believers to listen to their teachings and thus, eat the food sacrificed to idols (Rv 2). The weeds, the food sacrificed to idols, and the teachings of the Nicolaitans are all the same as

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the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This means that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil not only existed in Adam's time, but also in the time of Jesus' first and second comings. In Rv 18:2-3, the kingdom of evil spirits is figuratively called Babylon, where King Nebuchadnezzar ruled. Since Rv 18:23 says that Babylon has deceived all nations, it is not surprising to see that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is located within the kingdom of demons.

To summarize what has been explained thus far, the tree of life in the Garden of Eden is a person who speaks God's words. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil is a person who speaks the words of Satan. Therefore, eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is not eating real fruit, but listening to and accepting Satan's teachings. Since the tree of the knowledge of good and evil stood with the tree of life in the middle of the Garden of Eden, one can assume that the person it represents originally held an important position.

Although God said, "You must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will surely die," (Gn 2:15-17), Adam ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and lived until he was 930 years old (Gn 5:5). If Adam picked and ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, why did he not die immediately? Why did he live until the age of 930? In fact, something did die when Adam ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but it was not Adam's flesh. It was Adam's spirit, into which God had once breathed the breath of life, that

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died when Adam ate the fruit. After his spirit died, Adam returned to the dust (i.e., he went back to being mere flesh) and lived until the age of 930. When the spirit dies, however, the flesh eventually dies as well. Adam's flesh died because his spirit died first. Flesh with a dead spirit cannot attain eternal life and will ultimately die.

As mentioned above, the fruit of the tree of life and the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil are clearly not real fruit. It is thus, easy to understand that the Garden of Eden, its tree of life, and its one river that split into four headwaters were also not meant to be literally understood. Let us read next about the river that flows from the Garden of Eden.

(d) The river that is the source of the four headwaters

According to Gn 2:10, a river that waters the garden flows from Eden before dividing into four headwaters. The first is the Pishon, the second is the Gihon, the third is the Hiddekel, and the fourth is the Euphrates.

As mentioned above, the Garden of Eden, the tree of life, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil are figurative, not literal. If this is the case, what is the river that waters the Garden of Eden and then separates into four headwaters?

Even if the Garden of Eden and the river that flowed from it before splitting into four headwaters during Adam's time actually existed, we must find out what hidden spiritual meaning God is trying to reveal to us.

The water from the river that saturated the tabernacle in Adam's time (i.e., the Garden of Eden) symbolizes God's word (Am 8:11).

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The rivers that separate from it, flowing with spiritual water, symbolize the hearts of evangelists who convey the word to people. In Ez 47:1-5, water flows down from the threshold of the temple. In Rv 22:1-2, the river of the water of life as clear as crystal is flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

Revelation 9:14-15, on the other hand, says there are four angels bound at the river Euphrates ready to kill a third of mankind. According to Rv 16:12, the river Euphrates later dries up when an angel pours one of the seven golden bowls filled with God's wrath on it. When the river dries up its spiritual water (i.e., doctrines) are judged and disappear. The references above (Rv 9:14-15, 16:12) reveal that the time of Revelation's fulfillment is spiritually equivalent to the time of Adam.

(e) The serpent that deceived Eve

In Gn 3, the serpent in the Garden of Eden had a conversation with Eve. Before it was cursed for deceiving Eve, the serpent did not crawl on its belly (Gn 3:14). It was apparently very perceptive since the Bible says, "The serpent was more shrewd than any of the wild animals that the Lord God had made," (Gn 3:1).

If the serpent in Genesis was a literal serpent, then serpents should still be able to speak today. The Bible does not say that God made the speaking serpent mute. Revelation 12:9 and Rv 20:2 reveal the true identity of the serpent that deceived Eve. The ancient serpent in Adam's time was Satan, the devil, and the dragon. These four names all point to one entity.

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Since the Bible says the serpent was the shrewdest of the wild beasts created by God, it is clear that the serpent was also part of God's creation. As was explained earlier, the serpent (Satan) was an angel created by God. God did not originally create this angel as Satan; the angel became corrupt bringing Satan into existence. The "wild beasts" symbolize those who are not under God's protection.

If this is the case, did the spirit of Satan speak directly to Eve? Of course not. Satan entered a person's flesh and used that person to deceive Eve. Thus, the speaking serpent represents the person (or pastor) used by the spirit of Satan. As it is mentioned in "(c) The tree of the knowledge of good and evil that leads to death" under "i. The creation of Adam's world," Satan's purpose in deceiving Eve was to steal a person that belonged to God and the glory that God should have received.

At the first coming, Jesus called the Pharisees and Sadducees "snakes" and a "brood of vipers" (Mt 23:33). Jesus did not say this because they were literal snakes or because they were Satan themselves. He said it because the spirit of Satan had entered them.

Anyone who has become Satan's instrument does the things Satan does. After Satan entered Judas Iscariot, Judas went to the high priests and the officers of the temple guard to discuss how to hand Jesus over to them (Lk 22:3-4).

God said to the serpent that caused all men to be under sin: "Cursed are you above all the wild beasts and all the living creatures of the field! On your belly you will crawl and dust you will eat all the days of your life. And I will put hostility between you

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and the woman and between your offspring and her offspring; her offspring will attack your head, and you will attack her offspring's heel," (Gn 3:14-15). According to this prophecy, the serpent uses people who do not have God in their hearts; he uses people who are mere flesh—mere dust. Physical serpents do not eat dust. Since physical serpents live on insects and small animals, it is clear that this serpent and the dust it is supposed to eat are figurative.

The serpent's offspring (those who oppose God) have become the enemies of the woman's offspring (God's people). The prophecy of the woman's offspring crushing the serpent's head and the serpent striking the offspring's heel was fulfilled once at the time of Jesus' first coming and it will be fulfilled again at the time of the second coming. At the first coming, although the offspring of the woman—Jesus Christ—was crucified by the Jewish pastors (the offspring of the serpent), Jesus ultimately overcame Satan through his resurrection (Mt 28:1-6). At the second coming, the offspring of the woman—the child who will rule all nations—is persecuted by the group belonging to the dragon, but is later victorious over them (Rv 12).

I would like to mention something as I summarize the story of Adam's world. Since the secrets hidden within Gn 1-4 have been hidden since the creation of the world, they must never be understood literally. Does this mean that everything is spiritual, not physical? Of course not. For example, serpents do crawl on their bellies, women do have pain in childbirth, and men do painfully toil away to produce food from the ground. In general, God

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uses the characteristics of things in the physical world, which can be easily observed, to figuratively describe things in the spiritual world, which cannot be easily observed.

Today, because the sealed scroll is opened (Rv 6, 8, 10), I am testifying about the figurative language in God's word and its physical fulfillment. Concerning the world of Adam that God created, Adam was banished after he was deceived by the serpent and God left that place.

ii. The creation of Noah's world

God judged and brought the corrupt descendants of Adam to an end with the flood. God then created a new world centered around Noah. God was able to create this new world because he found one source of light named Noah.

When God passed judgment through the flood, it rained for 40 days and 40 nights (Gn 7:4). The waters flooded the earth for 150 days (Gn 7:24). The flood began on the 17th day of the second month, in the 600th year of Noah's life. It ended on the first day of the first month, in the 601st year of Noah's life, and the waters dried up (Gn 7:10-11, 8:13). That is when Noah's ark came to rest on Mt. Ararat (Gn 8:4).

As the waters dried up, Noah left the ark, built an altar, and sacrificed burnt offerings to God. Just as God did with Adam in Gn 1, God blessed Noah and his sons, telling them to be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth (Gn 9:1). God put all the beasts and

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birds, everything that moves on the earth, and the fish of the sea into their hands (Gn 9:1-2).

Noah then started farming and planted a vineyard. Noah's three sons that were with him on the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. These three sons of Noah populated all the earth (Gn 9:18-19). This is the creation of Noah's world. The genealogy of Noah is written in Gn 10.

iii. The creation of Abraham's world

God chose Abraham when the earth was filled with the wickedness of the Canaanites. The Canaanites were descendants of Noah's grandson Canaan, who was the son of Noah's second son, Ham. Abraham was a descendant of Noah's eldest son, Shem. God promised Abraham that he would become the father of all nations (Gn 17:4-7).

God allowed Ishmael and Isaac to be born to Abraham. Isaac fathered Jacob, and Jacob fathered twelve sons. Since he started the twelve tribes (Ex 28:21), Jacob became the forefather of Israel. Ishmael, however, who was the son of the slave woman Hagar, became the forefather of the Arabs.

Approximately 70 members of Jacob's family moved to Egypt to escape a famine. Over the next 400 years in Egypt, Jacob's family was so fruitful and multiplied so rapidly that they became the nation of Israel. At that time, the number of able-bodied men alone exceeded 600,000. In order to fulfill his promise to Abraham, God was preparing Abraham's descendants during those 400 years to

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conquer the mighty, but wicked Canaanites, who were living in the land God promised to Abraham. This is a summary of the creation of Abraham's world.

iv. The creation of the world of Moses

(a) Moses and the descendants of Israel

When it had been 400 years since the descendants of Israel moved to Egypt, God chose Moses to free them from their life of hard labor. After Moses led the Israelites through the Red Sea, he received at Mt. Sinai the stone tablets on which God had engraved his laws. Moses ruled the people according to those commands of God. According to the pattern God showed him, Moses built a tabernacle in which God could dwell (Ex 25:8-9). Using Moses to fulfill the promise God made to Abraham, God led his people toward the land of Canaan. This is the creation of the world of Moses.

(b) Joshua and the Israel

Moses died with the promised land right before his eyes, and shortly thereafter Joshua spearheaded the conquest of Canaan. At Gilgal, after crossing the Jordan River, Joshua set up twelve stones, which were brought from the bottom of the Jordan River. He did this because when he and the twelve tribes of Israel crossed the Jordan River with the ark of the covenant before them, God halted the flow of the river, making it stand still, and allowing the people to walk through on dry land (Jo 3:11-17). The stones were set up to

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proclaim the power of God to all the world's peoples and to make them fear him (Jo 4:20-24). This miracle is similar to when God parted the Red Sea and allowed the Israelites to cross with their sandals on their feet (Ex 14:15-31; Is 11:15).

Joshua, with the help of God, conquered the land of Canaan and divided it amongst the twelve tribes. When Joshua grew old, the Israelites gathered in Shechem and made a covenant with each other and with God: "We will serve God and listen to his voice." Joshua reminded them of all the laws and ordinances they had to keep. Joshua wrote all of these things in the book of God's law. He took a large stone and set it under an oak tree near the holy place of the Lord as a witness against the Israelites, because the stone had heard all the words God had spoken to the people (Jo 24:25-28). This summarizes the world that God created through Joshua after Moses.

v. The creation of the world of Jesus Christ

(a) Spiritual Israel

After Jesus brought Physical Israel to an end, he chose twelve disciples and created Spiritual Israel (Jn 1:1-14; Lk 16:16). Before Jesus' first coming, God's chosen people were people born of the physical seed of Abraham, that is, through natural descent. After Jesus' first coming, God's chosen people were believers born of the spiritual seed of God. Spiritual Israel refers to Christians who have been born of God's seed.

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God's seed is God's word (Lk 8:11). Jesus said that we must be born again of water and the spirit. That water is also the word of God (Am 8:11; Dt 32:1-2). Just as Jesus was born of God's seed and spirit (the holy spirit), Jesus' disciples were also born again of God's seed and holy spirit. In Physical Israel there were inward Jews and outward Jews (Rom 2:28-29). Spiritual Israel is exactly the same. Even though everyone claims to be Christians who believe in Jesus, only those who are born again of God's word and spirit are God's children—inward Christians.

When Spiritual Israel began, the laws of the Old Testament and the prophecies delivered by the Old Testament prophets came to an end (Lk 16:16). The law, which had played the role of an elementary teacher pointing to Christ, came to an end (Gal 3:24-25), and the prophecies of the Old Testament were completed because they had been physically fulfilled.

(b) The holy city New Jerusalem

Before his ascension, Jesus promised his disciples, "I am going away to make ready a place for you. And if I go and make ready a place for you, I will come again and take you to be with me, so that where I am you may be too," (Jn 14:2-3, 23). Jesus also commanded his disciples to deliver this gospel of the kingdom to the ends of the earth (Mt 28:19-20).

The place to which Jesus was referring is the holy city New Jerusalem in the spiritual realm. This city is the organization of spirits centered around God, Jesus, and the spirits of the martyrs. Jesus' twelve disciples became the city's twelve foundations

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(Rv 21:14). This city descends to the earth on the members of the twelve tribes, who have kept the promised words of Jesus at the time of his second coming.

Jesus called Apostle John to the throne in the spiritual realm and showed him future events (all the events of the book of Revelation) in a vision. Jesus revealed to John that God would soon return to the world. Since Jesus ascended to God in the spiritual realm he has been working toward this end, but he has also been working to deliver the gospel to the spirits in prison (1 Pt 3:18-19). He has been doing this so that despite the judgment their flesh has received because of their sins, their spirits may live just as God does (1 Pt 4:6). At the time of the Lord's second coming, Jesus will come together with those who have died in the Lord. Those who believe, obey, and whose bodies are alive at that time will receive salvation. Those spirits who receive salvation by accepting the gospel after death will also come with the Lord (1 Thes 4:13-14, 5:1-9).

(c) New Spiritual Israel

New Spiritual Israel is the kingdom that is created in the physical world during the second coming of Jesus. This new kingdom of New Spiritual Israel is created after the previous kingdom of Spiritual Israel is judged and brought to an end as prophesied in Rv 6. After Spiritual Israel comes to an end, according to Rv 7, Jesus and the angels first put God's seal on the foreheads of 144,000 people, and then the great multitude dressed in white is gathered (Rv 7:2-17). This is how the new kingdom is created. This is the kingdom created by the one who fights and overcomes Satan's Nicolaitans—the

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one who becomes Israel, chooses twelve disciples, and creates the twelve tribes. This work is described figuratively in Mt 13:24-30 and Mt 13:37-43 where angels harvest believers who have become good grain through the seed (word) sown by Jesus, and they store these believers in God's barn (heaven). The believers that become good grain are those who have reached maturity in terms of God's word, faith, and actions.

God prophesied that the seed would be sown in Jer 31:27. The good seed was sown (Mt 13:24) and its fruit is being harvested (Mt 13:30; Mk 4:29; Rv 14:14-16). All of this is done, ultimately, in order to create the twelve tribes of New Spiritual Israel. In Rv 14:1-5, these twelve tribes (the 144,000) are called the firstfruits that learn and sing the new song before the throne of God. They are the fruit of the tree life, which are born again through God's seed, the word of truth (Jas 1:18; 1 Pt 1:23).

The tree of life, which grew up from the seed of life (God's word—Mt 13:31-32), has twelve branches (Jn 15:1-5) and produces twelve kinds of fruit every month (Rv 22:1-2). The tree of life symbolizes a person (Prv 3:18). Its twelve branches are the twelve tribes, and its twelve kinds of fruit are the members of the twelve tribes. This is the physical fulfillment of the tree of life that appears in the physical world at the time of Revelation's fulfillment. Eating the fruit from this tree of life brings eternal life (Gn 3:22). For more information regarding the tree of life, please read section "(b) The tree of life and its fruit, which grants eternal life to those who eat it" found under "i. The creation of Adam's world."

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(d) The city of the millennium

After New Spiritual Israel is created, the spirits of the martyrs, who sacrificed their lives for God and Jesus, unite with those who refused to worship the beast and its image or to receive its mark. These people are the twelve tribes (i.e., the 144,000) in the physical world that are mentioned in Rv 7 and Rv 14. Once they are together they reign with Christ for 1,000 years. This is called the first resurrection (Rv 20:4-6). Those who participate in the first resurrection dwell in the city of the millennium that is also created in the physical world. God's kingdom, which is fully created when the holy city New Jerusalem comes down to Earth, is called the "city of the millennium" because its people are those who participate in the first resurrection and then reign as kings for 1,000 years.

According to Rv 14, the organization and throne of the spiritual kingdom of heaven, the holy city New Jerusalem, descends to dwell with the city of the millennium. This period of 1,000 years is the generation of Christ's rule and the time for the healing of all nations. At this time, the lifespan of people will grow longer like that of the trees (Is 65:17-23). Although Adam sinned, because of Jesus' crucifixion, the kingdom of heaven that unites the spiritual and physical worlds is created here on Earth (Rv 21:1-3).

Even if Satan is released after the 1,000 years to deceive Gog and Magog and attack the city of the millennium, the city will be protected and will reign for eternity. The city of the millennium is the place where the martyrs and the twelve tribes that are sealed live together with Christ. Since they participate in the first resurrection,

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they do not fall into unbelief or destruction. After the 1,000 years, anyone outside the city is destroyed. This includes people who are dead because of their unbelief. They are judged and thrown into the lake of fire—the second death. Thus, the twelve tribes of New Spiritual Israel, who live together with Christ in the city of the millennium, will live forever in a world without evil.

The last days of Spiritual Israel are like days of Noah and the days of Lot (Lk 17:26-30). After this time of the city of the millennium, people will realize that Spiritual Israel has been judged by fire according to the prophecies.

C. The creator's covenant with his chosen people

God, the creator of heaven and earth, chooses a pastor in every generation and makes a covenant with him. God grants unfathomable blessings to anyone who keeps his covenant and punishes accordingly anyone who breaks his covenant (Dt 28). God's covenants are conditional promises. Let us learn more about the types of covenants God made in every generation with his chosen people.

i. The covenant with Adam

God, who created Adam, created the Garden of Eden in the east and there made all kinds of fruit-bearing trees. The tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil were in the middle of the garden. God told Adam that he could eat from any tree in the garden except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, telling

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him he would die on the day he ate of that tree (Gn 2:16-17). This was the covenant between God and Adam.

ii. The covenant with Noah

Using the flood, God judged Adam's descendants because they were full of sin. God then created a new world centered around Noah and his three sons. When Noah and his family came out of the ark, God blessed them and told them to be fruitful, increase in number, and fill the earth. God placed all the beasts of the earth, birds of the air, and fish of the sea in their hands. He gave them all animals as food, but told them not to eat meat that still had its lifeblood in it. God also made a covenant with them saying that he would never again destroy all living creatures with a flood. As a sign of the covenant, God set a rainbow in the clouds (Gn 9:1-17). The rainbow was also a reminder of Adam's world that had sinned. Later on, Noah's second son Ham, even after seeing the rainbow of the covenant, sinned and was cursed just like Adam and Eve. Therefore, despite having seen the covenant, he was not able to keep it.

iii. The covenant with Abraham

God left the world of Noah, which had become corrupt, and chose Abraham. God made a promise with Abraham in the following manner:

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- And I will make your descendants like the dust of the earth, so that if anyone is able to count the dust of the earth, then your descendants also can be counted. (Gn 13:16)

- The Lord took him outside and said, "Gaze into the sky and count the stars – if you are able to count them!" Then he said to him, "So will your descendants be." (Gn 15:5)

- [13]Then the Lord said to Abram, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a foreign country. They will be enslaved and oppressed for four hundred years. [14]But I will execute judgment on the nation that they will serve. Afterward they will come out with many possessions. [15]But as for you, you will go to your ancestors in peace and be buried at a good old age. [16]In the fourth generation your descendants will return here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its limit." (Gn 15:13-16)

- [18]That day the Lord made a covenant with Abram: "To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates River – [19]the land of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, [20]Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, [21]Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites, and Jebusites." (Gn 15:18-21)

- I will indeed bless you, and I will greatly multiply your descendants so that they will be as countless as the stars in the sky or the grains of sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the strongholds of their enemies. (Gn 22:17)

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The year Abraham turned 99 years old, God made a covenant with him and told him he would become the father of many nations. God made an eternal covenant with Abraham and his descendants telling them that he would be their God. God instituted circumcision as a sign of the covenant. This is recorded in the following scripture passage:

- [1]When Abram was 99 years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, "I am the sovereign God. Walk before me and be blameless. [2]Then I will confirm my covenant between me and you, and I will give you a multitude of descendants." [3]Abram bowed down with his face to the ground, and God said to him, [4]"As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of a multitude of nations. [5]No longer will your name be Abram. Instead, your name will be Abraham because I will make you the father of a multitude of nations. [6]I will make you extremely fruitful. I will make nations of you, and kings will descend from you. [7]I will confirm my covenant as a perpetual covenant between me and you. It will extend to your descendants after you throughout their generations. I will be your God and the God of your descendants after you. [8]I will give the whole land of Canaan – the land where you are now residing – to you and your descendants after you as a permanent possession. I will be their God." [9]Then God said to Abraham, "As for you, you must keep the covenantal requirement I am imposing on you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. [10]This is my requirement that you and your descendants after you must keep: Every male among you must be circumcised. [11]You must circumcise the flesh of your

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> foreskins. This will be a reminder of the covenant between me and you. [12]Throughout your generations every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised, whether born in your house or bought with money from any foreigner who is not one of your descendants. [13]They must indeed be circumcised, whether born in your house or bought with money. The sign of my covenant will be visible in your flesh as a permanent reminder. [14]Any uncircumcised male who has not been circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin will be cut off from his people – he has failed to carry out my requirement." (Gn 17:1-14)

At this point let us find out specifically what God did in order to fulfill the promise he made with Abraham.

First, God gave Abraham many descendants. Among them, God's promise was fulfilled through the lineage of Jacob. Jacob was the son of Isaac, who was born to Sarah, Abraham's legal wife. God gave Jacob twelve sons, born to four different women. The sons, born as they were from different wombs, were especially jealous of Joseph because Jacob loved him the most. One day, Jacob's sons went out to graze their flocks at Shechem and left Joseph, who had his father's love all to himself, in a pit to die. Since the pit was located at a bend in the road where merchants from various nations frequently traveled, Joseph was saved by some Midianite merchants who sold him into slavery in Egypt. Joseph grew up in Egypt and one day, with the help of God, he interpreted one of Pharaoh's dreams. Since this was something no one else could do, Joseph was promoted and became the Egyptian prime minister.

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Several years later, Jacob's family faced a serious famine, and went to Egypt in search of food. Over 70 of Jacob's family members met Joseph, whom they thought was dead, and with Joseph's help they ended up settling in Egypt. Once there, Jacob's family was fruitful, multiplying very quickly.

As time passed, both Joseph and the Pharaoh who made Joseph prime minister died. The new Pharaoh felt threatened by the Hebrews because their population was growing so quickly. Pharaoh commanded the Hebrew midwives to kill all male newborns. He also sent the Hebrews to his construction sites and forced them into hard labor. Jacob's descendants grew weary of the hard life they led in Egypt, and they cried out to God. This happened about 400 years after God made his promise to Abraham. Since the time God had promised to Abraham had passed, God commanded Moses to lead the descendants of Israel out of Egypt and into the land of Canaan.

Since Moses died before reaching Canaan, Joshua took over the task of conquering Canaan. This was all part of the way the words of the covenant God made with Abraham were fulfilled. In fact, many related events had to occur for God's promise to Abraham to be fulfilled. God gave Jacob twelve sons through four different women. Rachel, whom Jacob loved, was barren for a long time until God allowed her to give birth to a son late in life. The special love Jacob showed Joseph caused Joseph's brothers to hate him and put him into a pit. God opened the eyes of the Midianite merchants in order to send Joseph to Egypt. He moved their hearts so that they

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would take Joseph and sell him into slavery in Egypt. God gave Pharaoh a difficult dream, and prevented all the Egyptian magicians from interpreting it. God gave the interpretation to Joseph alone. To send Jacob's family to Egypt, God sent a famine over the whole world but gave Egypt a plentiful harvest (Gn 41). Over 70 of Jacob's family members were able to meet Joseph, who had already become the Egyptian prime minister, and settle in Egypt safely all because God had been working behind the scenes. This plan gave Jacob's descendants the opportunity to escape the menacing threat of the mighty Canaanite tribes for 400 years and expand safely in Egypt. After the 400 years God promised to Abraham, God allowed Pharaoh to treat the Israelites harshly so that he could bring them back to Canaan. All these events were part of the detailed plan God created to fulfill the promise he made to Abraham.

Though a person may plan his course, it is the Lord who determines his steps (Prv 16:9). In his zeal, God will fulfill everything he has spoken (2 Kgs 19:31; Is 14:24, 37:32).

Since God kept his covenant with Abraham, it is clear that God is faithful in fulfilling all that he has promised. Just as God fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies at the time of Jesus' first coming (Jn 19:30), he fulfills all the New Testament prophecies at the time of the second coming (Rv 21:6).

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iv. The covenant with the chosen people at the time of Moses

When the Israelite people, who came out of Egypt, arrived at Mt. Sinai, God said the following to Moses:

- [5]"And now, if you will diligently listen to me and keep my covenant, then you will be my special possession out of all the nations, for all the earth is mine, [6]and you will be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you will speak to the Israelites." (Ex 19:5-6).

When Moses gathered all the elders and reported everything God had commanded, the people all responded by saying, "All that the LORD has commanded, we will do," (Ex 19:8). This was how the covenant between God and the people of Israel was made.

v. The covenant with the chosen people at the time of Joshua

After conquering Canaan and after it had been a long time since God gave the Israelites rest, Joshua, knowing that he was going to die soon, gathered all the people of the tribes of Israel at Shechem. There they made another covenant stating that they would serve only God.

After citing all the acts of grace God had bestowed since the time of their ancestor Abraham, Joshua told the people to serve only Jehovah God. He told them that if that option seemed undesirable to them, they should choose carefully whom they would serve

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(Jo 24:14-15). He warned, "If you abandon the Lord and worship foreign gods, he will turn against you; he will bring disaster on you and destroy you, though he once treated you well," (Jo 24:20). They responded by promising that they would never serve other gods, but would serve God, listening only to his voice.

Joshua recorded the events of that day in God's Book of the Law. He also took a large stone, put it under an oak tree near God's holy place and said, "This stone will be a witness against us. It has heard all the words the LORD has said to us. It will be a witness against you if you are untrue to your God," (Jo 24:27). For further reference, please read Jo 24:22-28.

vi. Jesus' new covenant

Jesus, who was born of a virgin according to prophecy (Is 7:14; Mt 1:23), set up a new covenant according to the promise of God (Jer 31:31-33; Lk 22:20). Since the new covenant Jesus established was made with believers in Jesus, it is totally different from the promises made in the past with Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Joshua.

God promised Jeremiah the prophet approximately 2,600 years ago that he would make a new covenant. Jesus came and established the new covenant in front of his disciples on the night of Passover (Mt 26:26-29). Regarding this covenant, Jesus said, "I tell you, from now on I will not drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom," (Mt 26:29). At the first coming, Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament and fed it to the

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people. At the second coming, Jesus fulfills the New Testament and feeds it to the people. This is the new covenant that will be fulfilled in the future. Let us find out more details regarding Jesus' new covenant.

- [10]"For this is the covenant that I will establish with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and I will inscribe them on their hearts. And I will be their God and they will be my people. [11]And there will be no need at all for each one to teach his countryman or each one to teach his brother saying,'Know the Lord,' since they will all know me, from the least to the greatest. [12]For I will be merciful toward their evil deeds, and their sins I will remember no longer." (Heb 8:10-12).

The "house of Israel" is another name for God's chosen people, and it symbolizes those who believe in Jesus. They are Spiritual Israel not Physical Israel. Physical Israel was judged at the time of the first coming and lost the right to be God's chosen people. God ignores people's physical bloodline and makes anyone who believes in Jesus one of his newly chosen people. God allows his law, which is his word, to be recorded in their hearts and minds. He atones for their sins and makes them his people. It is clear, however, from what Jesus said in Jn 14:23 ("If anyone loves me, he will obey my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and take up residence with him."), that this covenant is ultimately fulfilled only for those who actually keep his commands.

The prophecies of the four gospels and of Revelation make up the new covenant that will be fulfilled in the future. They are the

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representative word of the New Testament. The book of Revelation states that those who keep the promises recorded in it will attain heaven and eternal life. They will become God's kingdom and priests, but those who do not keep the promise will be judged.

In every generation, God made a covenant with his chosen people. These covenants the people made with God were all broken, however, because of the people's shortcomings. If the believers in the generation of the New Testament cannot keep the commands of the new covenant, they too, will be destroyed like the people of the Old Testament generation.

Most pastors and their congregation members do not know the meaning of the word *revelation*. Since pastors teach only with the commands of men, this is all their people can learn. They draw near to the Lord with their lips, but because their hearts are far from him (Is 29:9-13), he considers them foreigners and gentiles. Therefore, all believers should examine themselves to determine whether or not they know the meaning of the word revelation. The lack of knowledge of those who do not know the meaning of revelation proves that they are gentiles and that their hearts are far from God. Anyone who truly loves God and Jesus can understand and keep the words of the new covenant, which have been revealed.

vii. The covenant with New Spiritual Israel

The covenant between God and New Spiritual Israel is to believe and keep the words Jesus promised in the New Testament. There has never been a single generation where God fulfilled prophecy

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without first making a covenant. Believers who keep the words of the new covenant recorded in the New Testament become God's kingdom and priests, but anyone who cannot keep them will be judged. Since the holy city New Jerusalem of the spiritual world unites with the believers who keep the words of the new covenant, the tabernacle of these chosen people is the holy city in the physical world. Those who live in the city of the millennium, where the spirit and flesh unite, will not receive God's judgment, but will instead judge the dead. Therefore, only when we wash our robes with the water of life, which flows from the throne, and only when our names are recorded in the book of life can we enter the holy city and become God's kingdom and priests.

D. Betrayal

Betrayal[10] is turning one's back on God, who is truth. Thus, it has nothing to do with people who do not even know God. The first betrayal occurred in the spiritual world. One of God's cherubs, the one called morning star and son of the dawn, became arrogant and greedy. He wanted to be like God. That angel, who betrayed, was thrown from heaven down to the earth. He deceived people whom God had chosen. It was the deception of the angels that sinned that caused the betrayal of the chosen people. Let us examine the history of betrayal that has been happening since the time of Adam.

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10 – The Korean word for betrayal is *baedo* (배도), which consists of two Chinese characters. The first means *back* and the second means *path*. Therefore, the Korean word for betrayal literally means *turning one's back on the path*.

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i. The betrayal of Adam's world

In general, betrayal is always preceded by deception. People are deceived because of their ignorance of God and because of their unbelief. Jesus and Apostle Paul implored believers facing the end times not to be taken in by any deceptive spirits, words, or letters (2 Thes 2:2).

Adam, who was the first person chosen by God, betrayed because of the serpent's deception. Eve, Adam's wife, knew God's word; she knew that if she ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil she would die. The serpent, however, had the wisdom and eloquence to deceive Eve.

The serpent asked Eve, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" (Gn 3:1). This question was intended to undermine Eve's conviction that eating the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was wrong. The serpent knew very well that God had told Adam not to eat the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Eve told the serpent that God had forbidden them from eating or even touching the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gn 3:3). The serpent lied to Eve saying that if she ate the fruit she would become like God. This was how Eve broke the covenant she and Adam had made with God (Gn 3:4-5). Satan even used God's word three times in an effort to tempt Jesus into stumbling (Mt 4:1-11). Satan's tenacity is clear in the following passage:

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❖ [4]The serpent said to the woman, "Surely you will not die, [5]for God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will open and you will be like divine beings who know good and evil." (Gn 3:4-5)

When the woman looked at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, it seemed to be good for food, pleasing to the eye, and desirable for gaining wisdom. The woman took the fruit and ate it. She also gave the fruit to her husband and made him eat it. They should have equated the keeping of God's commands to their very lives. They should have dutifully obeyed his commands. They were, however, tempted by the words of the serpent when he said something different from God. As a result, they made all of humanity slaves to sin. Since then, because of Adam and Eve's sin, God has been working continuously without rest. Why did Eve eat the fruit God had prohibited? The serpent told her that instead of dying she would become like God. Eve ate the fruit because of her greed. This greed gave birth to sin, and when sin was full-grown, it led to death (Jas 1:15).

The spirit of the devil entered Adam and Eve, who listened to the words of the serpent. Spirits work through words (Dn 7:25; 1 Jn 4:5-6; Rv 13:6). The eyes of the two people that ate the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil were opened, and they realized they were naked. They sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. Adam and Eve hid among the trees to escape God as he was walking in the garden (Gn 3:7-8).

The fact that Adam and Eve were embarrassed and hid when they realized they were naked means that their shame was revealed

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because of their sin. As I previously explained, the Garden of Eden, the trees, the rivers, and the serpent in Adam's time all have spiritual meanings. The fact that Adam and Eve were naked also has a spiritual meaning.

King Saul told his son Jonathan that the help Jonathan had given David (whom Saul thought was opposing him) brought as much shame on the family as if people had seen Jonathan's mother naked (1 Sm 20:30, NKJV). While God was carrying out his work of creation, Adam and Eve felt no shame despite their nakedness (Gn 2:25). Throwing out the words of God's covenant and being deceived by the serpent's words, however, is shameful—just as shameful as being naked.

Jesus wrote a letter to the messenger of the church in Laodicea telling the messenger that he does not realize he is wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked. Jesus pleads, "Take my advice and buy gold from me refined by fire so you can become rich! Buy from me white clothing so you can be clothed and your shameful nakedness will not be exposed, and buy eye salve to put on your eyes so you can see!" (Rv 3:17-18). If these words were meant to be understood literally, why does the messenger of Laodicea not realize he is naked? In Rv 19:8, fine linen, worn by the bride of the Lamb for the wedding, represents the "righteous deeds of the saints." The nakedness of the messenger of Laodicea, and of Adam and Eve is not about physical clothing for their physical bodies. Adam and Eve did not keep God's word; they had relations with the serpent

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and received the serpent's words. They committed spiritual adultery, and in doing so, they became naked (Ez 16:36).

This act of throwing off and ignoring the words of God is betrayal, because God is our intended groom (Hos 2:19; Jer 31:32). By receiving the words of the serpent, which is the same as receiving Satan's seed, Adam and Eve took the devil as their spiritual groom.

When God rebuked Adam and Eve for eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Adam made an excuse by blaming his betrayal on the woman God had given him. The woman made an excuse by blaming her betrayal on the serpent that tempted her. Genesis 3 expresses this same idea when it says that Adam and Eve covered the lower parts of their bodies with fig leaves. Were their excuses acceptable? Ultimately, it was Adam and Eve themselves who broke the covenant because they did not truly believe in God's word.

God cursed the serpent, and greatly increased the pain of childbirth for the woman. He made her husband rule over her. God told Adam he would toil all the days of his life to eat the fruit of his efforts, and that in the end, he would return to dust (Gn 3:16-19).

After Adam and Eve had betrayed, God said, "Now that the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil, he must not be allowed to stretch out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever," (Gn 3:22). God then banished Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden. God blocked the way to the tree of life by placing cherubim (i.e., angels) and a flaming sword, flashing back and forth, on the east side of the Garden of Eden.

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There is something that should be carefully considered at this point. Adam and Eve became "like one of us" because they knew good and evil. To whom was God referring when he mentioned this "one of us" that Adam and Eve came to resemble? God was referring to the spirit of Satan, the angel that sinned, because he entered the serpent that deceived Eve. When God made people, he said, "Let us make humankind in our image, after our likeness, so they may rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move on the earth," (Gn 1:26). When God used the word "us," he was referring to himself and all the angels that belong to him, whom God had created prior to creating people. Adam and Eve, who should have known only what is good, also came to know evil through the murdering serpent that belonged to Satan.

Evil overcame Adam when he broke the command that he should not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. An evil person cannot be allowed to eat from the tree of life and live eternally. God, thus, had no choice but to banish Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden because they had become mixed with good and evil.

After his banishment, Adam had his son Seth at the age of 130. He died after living a long life of 930 years. Adam's spirit died as soon as he sinned because the breath God had given Adam left him. In the end, Adam's physical body also returned to its original form—dust without the breath of life. The sons of God also returned

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to the flesh and died, because they walked away from God's will by marrying the daughters of men (Gn 6:1-3).

There were nine generations from Adam to Noah. Methuselah was Adam's longest-lived descendant, living 969 years. The people of Adam's world lived long lives, generally over 900 years. The fact that their flesh was long-lived, however, does not imply that their spirits lived that long.

ii. The betrayal of Noah's world

Noah, after escaping judgment in the flood, came out of the ark and proceeded to plant a vineyard. One day, Noah drank the wine of his vineyard until he became drunk. As Noah slept inside his tent, Ham, the second son of Noah, saw his father's nakedness and reported it to his brothers. Shem and Japheth, however, walked in backwards and covered their father's nakedness with a garment. Ham's actions were the same as what the serpent did to Adam and Eve: the serpent tricked them into eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil so that they realized they were naked. When Shem and Japheth covered their father's nakedness it was just like when Adam and Eve covered their naked bodies with fig leaves. When Noah awoke and found out what Ham had done to him, he cursed Ham, saying that Ham's son, Canaan, would be the lowest of slaves to his brothers (Gn 9:20-27).

As explained in the section entitled "i. The betrayal of Adam's world," it was Satan that revealed Noah's nakedness. The serpent and Ham played the role of Satan's servants. This group of Satan

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deceived Adam, Eve, and Ham, so that they came to realize their nakedness. Revealing one's father's disgrace, as Ham did, is lawlessness. Why would there be a curse involved if no one sinned? If Canaan and his father, Ham, had not sinned, why would God have commanded Abraham and Moses to conquer the land of Canaan and completely destroy it? Just as Adam and Eve realized that they were naked upon hearing the words of the serpent, Satan must have also been working in Noah's world. Noah cursed Ham because the spirit that entered Ham was the same spirit that entered the serpent in the beginning of Genesis. Ham revealed his father's nakedness because he ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Noah lived 350 more years after the flood and died at the age of 950. The descendants of Noah's three sons all shared one language. As they moved eastward, they settled on a plain in Shinar. There they built themselves a city with a tower that reached to the heavens, so that they might make a name for themselves and not be scattered throughout the whole world. Knowing their arrogance, God confused their language and scattered them throughout the world so that they stopped building the city. That place was called Babel because that was where God confused the languages of the world (Gn 11:1-9).

Later, the land of Canaan, the former home of Canaan's cursed descendants, was conquered by Joshua, Moses' successor. This was the final outcome of the betrayal of Noah's world.

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iii. The betrayal of Moses' world

The twelve tribes of Israel, who followed Moses out of Egypt, made a covenant with God in the desert surrounding Mt. Sinai. The Israelites, however, did not trust God and complained. They refused to obey God's will while dwelling in the desert. These people, however, need not even be mentioned because Aaron, their leader who spoke on Moses' behalf, also disobeyed God.

(a) Aaron's betrayal

Moses went up Mt. Sinai after he delivered the descendants of Israel from Egypt. On the seventh day God called to Moses from within the cloud, and Moses stayed on the mountain for 40 days and 40 nights (Ex 24:12-18). Moses came down the mountain with two tablets of stone, on which God had engraved instructions. What happened while Moses was on the mountain?

When Moses took longer coming down the mountain than the people expected, they lost faith in Moses and asked Aaron to make other gods for them. Aaron did not deal well with the crowd. Instead of rebuking them, Aaron made them a golden idol in the shape of a calf and placed an altar in front of it (Ex 32:1-6). Aaron, who was appointed to be Moses' spiritual helper, should have helped Moses by worshiping God more earnestly than anyone else. He could not, however, turn down the demands of those ignorant people. He made the idol and allowed people to worship it. What a deplorable man he was!

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◆ [1]When the people saw that Moses delayed in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said to him, "Get up, make us gods that will go before us. As for this fellow Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him! [2]So Aaron said to them, "Break off the gold earrings that are on the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me." [3]So all the people broke off the gold earrings that were on their ears and brought them to Aaron. [4]He accepted the gold from them, fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made a molten calf. Then they said, "These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt." [5]When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it, and Aaron made a proclamation and said, "Tomorrow will be a feast to the Lord." [6]So they got up early on the next day and offered up burnt offerings and brought peace offerings, and the people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play. (Ex 32:1-6)

Moses was furious when he came down the mountain and realized what had happened. He threw down and broke the tablets God had given him. He burned the golden calf in the fire. Then he ground it to powder and forced the Israelites to drink it (Ex 32:20). When Moses rebuked Aaron for making the golden calf idol, Aaron made an excuse, retorting, "You know these people, that they tend to evil," (Ex 32:21-24). The people were running so wild that they became a laughingstock to their enemies. This was all because Aaron had let them get out of control (Ex 32:25). Moses charged the Levites, who stood for God, with judging roughly 3,000 reckless

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Israelites. Thus, on that day, many were slaughtered as punishment for their betrayal of God and Moses.

(b) Moses' mistakes

Although Moses usually blamed Aaron and became enraged whenever the Israelites became rebellious, he too disobeyed God's word. Although Moses spoke with God in person and led the Israelites to the land of Canaan over the course of 40 years, he paid a hefty price for his sin. Moses had to die with the promised land of Canaan in sight; he was not allowed to enter it. Let us consider the mistakes that led to his death.

According to Nm 20:1-13, when the Israelites entered the wilderness of Zin, they rallied against Moses and Aaron because they had no water to drink. God told Moses to use his staff to command a rock to pour out its water. Disregarding God's command, Moses struck the rock with his staff saying, "Must we bring water out of this rock for you?"

In saying "we," Moses acted in arrogance. He made it sound as if he and Aaron had the ability to produce water. He spoke as if giving or not giving the people water was his and Aaron's decision. In addition, Moses did not command the rock to pour out its water; he merely struck the rock twice with his staff. Moses and Aaron sinned against God because they did not trust God enough to reveal his holiness to the Israelites. As a result, God told them that they would not be allowed to bring the assembly of Israel into the promised land.

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✦ 7Then the Lord spoke to Moses: 8"Take the staff and assemble the community, you and Aaron your brother, and then speak to the rock before their eyes. It will pour forth its water, and you will bring water out of the rock for them, and so you will give the community and their beasts water to drink." 9So Moses took the staff from before the Lord, just as he commanded him. 10Then Moses and Aaron gathered the community together in front of the rock, and he said to them, "Listen, you rebels, must we bring water out of this rock for you?" 11Then Moses raised his hand, and struck the rock twice with his staff. And water came out abundantly. So the community drank, and their beasts drank too. 12Then the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not trust me enough to show me as holy before the Israelites, therefore you will not bring this community into the land I have given them." 13These are the waters of Meribah, because the Israelites contended with the Lord, and his holiness was maintained among them. (Nm 20:7-13)

God was furious because Moses and Aaron did not reveal God's glory and holiness at the spring of Meribah. As punishment, they died right in front of the promised land of Canaan (Nm 20:22-29, Nm 27:12-14; Ps 106:32-33). Moses lived to the age of 120 before he was buried on Mt. Nebo (Dt 32:48-52).

✦ 12Then the Lord said to Moses, "Go up this mountain of the Abarim range, and see the land I have given to the Israelites. 13When you have seen it, you will be gathered to your ancestors, as Aaron your brother was gathered to his ancestors. 14For in the wilderness of Zin when the community rebelled against me, you rebelled against my

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command to show me as holy before their eyes over the water – the water of Meribah in Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin." (Nm 27:12-14)

◆ [48]Then the Lord said to Moses that same day, [49]"Go up to this Abarim hill country, to Mount Nebo (which is in the land of Moab opposite Jericho) and look at the land of Canaan that I am giving to the Israelites as a possession. [50]You will die on the mountain that you ascend and join your deceased ancestors, just as Aaron your brother died on Mount Hor and joined his deceased ancestors." (Dt 32:48-52)

(c) The betrayal of Israel's descendants

God forced the Israelites to wander in the wilderness for 40 years before entering the land of Canaan—a place it should have taken them only four days to reach. God did this to humble them and to see whether or not they would keep his commandments.

◆ Remember the whole way by which he has brought you these forty years through the desert so that he might, by humbling you, test you to see if you have it within you to keep his commandments or not. (Dt 8:2)

The Israelites, who followed Moses out of Egypt, disobeyed God's words because they did not unite the words with faith. That is why most of the Israelites died in the desert, unable to enter the promised land of Canaan. According to Dt 32, God knew in advance that the Israelites would deny him and would worship gentile gods after entering the land of Canaan. God told Moses to write songs for the Israelites to sing regarding their future sins. Much later, God

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reflected on the events of those days when he talked about making a covenant with the forefathers of Israel when he led them by the hand out of Egypt. He complained that they broke his covenant even though he was a husband to them (Jer 31:31-32; Heb 8:8-9).

iv. The betrayal of Joshua's world

When the Israelites entered the land of Canaan they served God and kept his commandments for a time because the elders who had experienced everything God had done for Israel were still with them (Jo 24:31; Jgs 2:7). The Israelites, however, left God after Joshua and the other elders died. Everything Joshua had taught them throughout his lifetime came to nothing. The covenant, which the descendants of Israel made before God in Shechem, was broken. After Joshua's death, the details of the betrayal of the Israelites are recorded from Judges to Malachi. The figure that best represents Israel's betrayal is Solomon.

God commanded Solomon to stay away from gentile women, warning him that if he married gentile women, he would worship gentile gods. In spite of God's warning, Solomon took a number of gentile wives and concubines, and with them he worshiped gentile gods. Israel was divided into Israel and Judah because of Solomon's betrayal. After its division, God promised in the Old Testament that he would send his people a Messiah (Mal 3:1; Ps 2:6-7; Is 61:1-3; Jer 31:22; etc.). Then, even though Jesus Christ came according to the Old Testament prophecies, the Israelites refused to accept

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him (Jn 1:10-11). Instead, they ended up killing him. This was the biggest sin they ever committed.

v. The betrayal of Spiritual Israel

The New Testament contains prophecies that Jesus will fulfill in the future. The New Testament also contains the promise that Christians must keep with Jesus. Those who keep the promise with Jesus and accept him when he returns at his second coming are the ones who are saved.

Jesus said that night would come when he left (Jn 9:4). He also asked, "When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?," (Lk 18:8). Even in Jesus' first coming, he came to his own people, but they did not receive him.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is coming at the end of the age. Before he returns, however, Spiritual Israel, which was created through the seed of the word sown by Jesus, must betray its covenant (2 Thes 2:1-4). Revelation 2 and 3 contain detailed prophecies about the events of this betrayal of the first heaven (i.e., God's chosen people of Spiritual Israel—Christians). Briefly, the seven angels of the tabernacle of the seven golden lampstands, along with their congregation members, forsake Jesus, their first love, by eating food sacrificed to idols and by receiving the teachings of the Nicolaitans (i.e., the synagogue of Satan). According to Rv 13, the chosen people of the tabernacle worship and receive the mark of the beast that belongs to the dragon. Is this not betrayal?

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In Rv 18, it says all nations have betrayed because they are deceived by Babylon, the home of demons.

Today, most Christians think that by simply believing in Jesus, they have been saved and have already received the holy spirit. This misunderstanding leads to idleness, which causes them to stray from the word and ultimately leads them to a deep spiritual sleep. Destruction will come on them suddenly (1 Thes 5:1-3).

If we want to accept Jesus when he returns, we must be spiritually awake. We must prepare our lamp and our oil and we must be fully clothed (Mt 25:1-13, 24:42-44; 1 Thes 5:4-8). Before the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, there is no way for the first heaven (i.e., the Christian church) to be saved if it is not awake in relation to the promises of Jesus. They have to know about the events of the first heaven's betrayal to understand the events of its destruction that occur afterwards. This knowledge leads to the acceptance of Jesus at his second coming. From the time of Adam to the time of Revelation, God has always made a covenant with his chosen people. His chosen people, however, have always betrayed their covenant with God. Thus, even at the time of the second coming, Spiritual Israel is prophesied to betray God just like the people of Physical Israel did (Rv 11:8). Believers should, therefore, understand the Bible deeply in order to remain spiritually awake at all times and avoid becoming a betrayer.

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vi. The betrayal at the time of the city of the millennium

In Rv 19 and 20, God reigns over all nations after judging Babylon. At the time of the second coming, after Satan is chained by an angel in the abyss for 1,000 years, he will be released from his prison to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth—Gog and Magog. Satan will gather them and surround the camp of God's people, which is the city he loves. Fire will then come down from heaven to devour Gog and Magog, and the devil will be thrown into the lake of burning sulfur (Rv 20:7-10). Those who are outside the city of the millennium will be deceived by Satan when he is released from the abyss after the 1,000 years are over. When these people, who are deceived, attempt to destroy God's beloved city and its people, they are acting in betrayal. There will not, however, be any betrayal within the city of the millennium. This is because the souls of those who were martyred because of their testimony about Jesus are living together in the city of the millennium with those who were victorious over the beast.

E. Destruction

i. The destruction of Adam's world

[Gn 6-8]

The one and only God created Adam, gave him life, and made him into a living being. God gave Adam all he had created so that

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Adam could care for it. Adam, however, did not keep the promise God had commanded, and his failure led consequently to his destruction. God commanded, "You must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." Adam knew that he would die if he ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, yet he still disobeyed God's command. Adam ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil because he believed in just one statement from the serpent when it said that he would not die, but that he would become like God. Adam and Eve did not believe God's words. Instead they believed Satan, making both of them betrayers greedy to become like God. In Ez 28, Is 14, and 2 Thes 2, Satan calls himself God. This is exactly what happened with Adam and Eve. Why would God ignore this act of betrayal? God judged Adam, Eve, and the serpent, such that Adam and Eve went back to dust.

After this, Adam was kicked out of Eden and his descendants fell in love with the daughters of men. They became mortal like Adam because God left them. God left his people because of their sins. God had to leave, because if he unites with a sinner, he unites with sin. After God left his people, he returned to choose Noah, who was among the ninth generation of Adam's descendants. After saving Noah's family of eight, God used a flood to sweep away and destroy Adam's sinful generation. Why did God wipe away all he had created? God did not want the filth of their sin to affect Noah's family. Thus, we should keep the new covenant God has commanded us to keep if we do not want to be destroyed like Adam's generation (Mt 26:26-29; Heb 8:7-12).

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ii. The destruction of Noah's world

While Adam's generation was being destroyed, Noah (of the ninth generation from Adam) and his family were saved. Thus, the process of re-creation began at Mt. Ararat. God, however, also found fault in Noah's generation. After the flood, Noah proceeded to plant a vineyard. Noah became drunk on its wine and lay down uncovered. Ham, the second son of Noah, revealed his father's shame to his two brothers by telling them about Noah's nakedness. This is like when the serpent made Eve eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and told her about her nakedness. Satan entered Ham and worked through him, and because of this event Noah cursed Ham's son, Canaan, making him the slave of his brothers' slaves (Gn 9:20-27).

As Noah's descendants were increasing in number, they tried to build a tower in the plain of Shinar that would reach to the heavens. They wanted to make a name for themselves so they would not be scattered throughout the world. To humble them, God came down to the tower, confused their language so they could not understand one another, and scattered them over all the earth (Gn 11:1-9). God destroyed Noah's generation, which had decayed. More clearly, he destroyed the generation of Canaan. To destroy Canaan's generation, God sent Jacob's family into Egypt for 400 years so the Israelites would be fruitful and multiply. Accordingly, they entered Egypt and became exceedingly numerous. After choosing Moses, God led Moses and the Israelites out of their exile in Egypt so that they could conquer the land of Canaan. Just as

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Adam's sinful generation was destroyed by the flood, the corrupt descendants of Noah, the people of Canaan's generation, were destroyed by Moses' generation. This is because, just like Adam, the descendants of Noah, Canaan's generation, disobeyed God. After Joshua conquered the land of Canaan, however, he failed to fully destroy the descendants of Canaan. It was these survivors of the seven tribes of Canaan who later made the Israelites worship idols and made their lives difficult.

iii. The destruction of Moses' world

The generation of Israel that came after Moses and before Jesus is called Moses' generation. These descendants of Abraham, who came out of Egypt with Moses, were also destroyed because they did not keep their covenant with God. According to Hos 6:7, these Israelites were just like Adam, in that they were unfaithful to God by breaking the covenant they had made with him. In response, God punished the unbelieving Israelites, who grumbled against God and disobeyed him while they were in the desert.

Ten of the men sent out to spy on the land of Canaan did not believe God and instead grumbled against him, saying Canaan was an impossible land to conquer. God destroyed the first generation of Israelites that came out of Egypt by preventing men 20 years old or older from seeing the land he had promised them. God did this because they were shaken by the unbelieving words of the ten spies, and then they no longer wholeheartedly followed God. God forced them to wander in the desert for 40 years until

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the whole generation of those who had done evil in his sight was gone (Nm 32:10-13).

Even though the next generation of Israelites was allowed to enter the land of Canaan, they disobeyed God's command in not completely driving out the Canaanites. This became a snare for them. The Israelites disobeyed the command of God because he told them to break down the altars of Canaan and forbid them from making any covenants with its people. The Israelites, however, worshiped Canaan's foreign gods, breaking their covenant with the one true God (Jgs 2:2). This is the snare that brought destruction upon them.

King Solomon stands out in his love for foreign women, who all led him astray into disobeying God's commands by worshiping foreign gods. The descendants of Israel had to pay the price for their disobedience. After King Solomon's generation, the twelve tribes of Israel were divided into two groups—north and south.

God then proceeded to use the people of gentile nations (the Philistines, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, etc.) as a hammer to judge and destroy the decrepit nation of Israel. God even sent Jesus to reach out to save his people, but they refused to accept him because of their stubbornness. As a result, Physical Israel had to meet its end through John the Baptist (Mt 11:13). Since Physical Israel was abandoned by God, its time as his chosen nation came to an end. This was its destruction.

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iv. The destruction of Spiritual Israel

Jesus' generation (i.e., the generation of Spiritual Israel), which was created through the seed Jesus sowed during his first coming, comes to an end at the time of the harvest (the end of the age). At harvest time, the book of Revelation is fulfilled and the events of destruction appear according to prophecy.

According to Rv 13, a beast with seven heads and ten horns comes out of the sea and enters God's heavenly dwelling place. The beast is given power to make war against the believers there and to conquer them. The dragon gives the beast authority over every tribe, people, language and nation. Thus, all the inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast, all of those whose names have not been written in the book of life that belongs to the Lamb. In addition, another beast comes from the earth and receives authority from the first beast, which comes from the sea, to cause fire to come down from heaven to earth. The beast that comes from the earth sets up an image on behalf of the first beast and causes all who refuse to worship the image to be killed. The beast that comes from the earth forces everyone to receive a mark on their right hand or forehead, such that no one can buy or sell without the mark. This destruction of Spiritual Israel is also prophesied in Mt 24 when it says that the sun will be darkened, the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky.

Spiritual Israel is destroyed because they betray God's word just like Adam did (2 Thes 2:1-12). The seed of heaven's gospel was planted in Spiritual Israel's field for about 2,000 years. When the

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harvest time comes, the wheat is supposed to be gathered and brought into the barn. The weeds are then collected and tied in bundles to be burned (Mt 3:12, 13:30). According to the promises of the New Testament, this is the end of the world; it is the destruction of the corrupted chosen people.

- [1]Now regarding the arrival of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to be with him, we ask you, brothers and sisters, [2]not to be easily shaken from your composure or disturbed by any kind of spirit or message or letter allegedly from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord is already here. [3]Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not arrive until the rebellion comes and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction. [4]He opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, and as a result he takes his seat in God's temple, displaying himself as God. ... [9]The arrival of the lawless one will be by Satan's working with all kinds of miracles and signs and false wonders, [10]and with every kind of evil deception directed against those who are perishing, because they found no place in their hearts for the truth so as to be saved. [11]Consequently God sends on them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false. [12]And so all of them who have not believed the truth but have delighted in evil will be condemned. (2 Thes 2:1-12)

- His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clean out his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the storehouse, but the chaff he will burn up with inextinguishable fire. (Mt 3:12)

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- Let both grow together until the harvest. At harvest time I will tell the reapers, "First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned, but then gather the wheat into my barn." (Mt 13:30)

v. The destruction of those outside the holy city after the millennium

There is also an event of destruction during the generation of New Spiritual Israel, which is created after the destruction of Spiritual Israel. There is, however, a definite difference between this destruction and the events of destruction that happened in previous generations. This time, the people of God, who are inside his holy beloved city, are not destroyed.

Inside the holy city, those who take part in the first resurrection will be priests of God and of Christ and they will reign with him for 1,000 years. This 1,000 years is the time for the healing of all nations. All nations must wash their robes in the water of the river of life to enter the holy city of the millennium.

Satan will be locked up during the 1,000 years, but he will be set free again when the 1,000 years are over. Satan will deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth—Gog and Magog. Satan will gather them and surround the city of God's people. Nevertheless, fire will come down from heaven to devour Gog and Magog, and the devil will be thrown into the lake of burning sulfur. Those outside the holy city will be deceived by Satan, but those inside the holy city will not be harmed. This is why Rv 20 states that those who take part in the first resurrection are blessed and holy.

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F. The selection of a new pastor

i. Orthodoxy and a new pastor

The first work of God, who created the heavens and the earth, was to find a light among the formless, empty, and dark heavens and earth (Gn 1:1-3). We know this light refers to a pastor, since we have already discussed Gn 1. God chooses a new pastor whenever he creates a new generation. This takes place after the destruction of the previous generation that has become corrupt. We can verify this by looking at the history of the world, from its creation until today.

When God created Adam, he blessed him with many things; he told Adam to rule over all that he had created. Yet when Adam betrayed God by breaking his command, God did not hesitate to abandon Adam. God then chose Noah, a righteous man from among Adam's descendants, to destroy the rest of Adam's corrupt descendants with a flood. If we call the generation that began with Adam the vanishing first heaven, then the newly created generation of Noah is the new heaven. Adam's role as the appointed leader of the previous heaven came to an end, and Noah was appointed to rule over the new generation. When Adam was first created he was one with God and was orthodox because the truth came from him. When Adam's generation turned to night upon God's departure, they became an old, worn-out tradition. If God is no longer present, orthodoxy is no longer orthodox.

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After Adam, his descendants were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage; they relaxed and left God. They probably thought it was strange and even ridiculed Noah for building an ark before the flood came. But whose word was right? God used the flood to sweep away everything from Adam's corrupt generation. He chose Noah to re-create and made him prosper.

That, however, did not last long. Soon, fault was also found among Noah's generation. Noah became drunk with wine and lay uncovered. His second son Ham went outside and told his two brothers about their father's nakedness. Noah cursed Canaan, the son of Ham. Canaan's descendants became a tribe of idol worshippers. God chose Moses and Joshua, who were descendants of Abraham, to destroy and conquer the land of Canaan. Abraham was a descendant of Noah (the ninth generation after Noah's first son Shem).

When God left Noah's corrupt generation and went to Moses, the previous heaven of Noah became night because it lost the light of life. The next heaven, which is Moses' generation, became day because it had the light of life. Which should be considered orthodox: the old heaven or the new heaven? Of course, it is the new heaven God has just created that is orthodox. Unfortunately, the people of Israel that Moses led out of Egypt disobeyed God's every command. This is why God left the disobedient generation of Israel and went instead to Jesus.

The people of Israel followed the letter of the law Moses received rather than its intended meaning. They persecuted Jesus as a cult leader and claimed themselves to be orthodox while following the

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deteriorated traditions of their elders (Acts 24:5). The true orthodoxy was Jesus, because he was one with God. The descendants of Israel, who criticized Jesus, merely represented an old, worn-out tradition.

The first heaven, which had become corrupt, began in the time of Moses and lasted until the time of John the Baptist. The new heaven began with Jesus. Thus, Physical Israel was the first heaven that came to an end, and Spiritual Israel was the new heaven that began at the time of Jesus' first coming. Christian pastors have been preaching the gospel of Jesus to this day. Jesus promised that when the gospel of heaven is spread to the ends of the earth, he will return in spirit to unite with his promised pastor (Mt 24:27). Just as the Old Testament prophesies about the messenger of the covenant sent from God (Mal 3:1; Ps 2:6-7; Is 61:1-3; Jer 31:22, etc.), the New Testament prophesies that Jesus will send a promised pastor (Jn 14:16-17, 26; Jn 15:26; Jn 16:13-15; Rv 1:1-3; Rv 22:8, 16, etc).

Today's pastors will persecute the promised pastor as a cult leader in the same way the Jewish priests persecuted Jesus. Since Jesus was one with God, calling him a cult was calling God a cult (Jn 15). In the same way, because the promised pastor is one with Jesus, persecuting him is persecuting Jesus Christ.

Whenever one generation passes away (the generation of the first heaven), another generation begins (the generation of the new heaven). The pastors of the first heaven always claim to be orthodox while persecuting the pastors and congregations members of the new heaven, calling them a cult. In the time of the second coming,

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which brings an end to the generation that precedes it, who will be orthodox? Will it be the messenger of the covenant promised in the New Testament or the ordinary pastors? Which pastor has the word of Jesus, which is the light of life?

No one in today's generation speaks the truth, nor does anyone seek it. No one realizes that this generation has become as dark as night (Jn 9:45). Everyone has returned to the flesh. They honor God with their lips, but they have fallen into a life of faith that seeks only blessings. They persecute the truth by calling it a lie, and they persecute the truly orthodox, by calling them a cult.

When he noticed that Catholicism was full of decay and oppression, the priest Martin Luther began a religious reformation that, after much bloodshed, led to Protestantism. How do today's Protestant churches measure up? The church is divided into many denominations and religious bodies. Pastors have been blinded by materialism because of their appetite for power. They criticize and fight one another. They even persecute some people who testify that they have been saved through the word of God and Jesus—through the blood Jesus shed on the cross—by calling them a cult. Is it not clear that today's churches are even more corrupt than the Catholic church was at the time of its reformation?

How will today's pastors react if Jesus chooses a pastor to proclaim the truth and decisively start a new reformation? Just like the leaders of previous generations did, they will call Jesus' chosen pastor a cult leader. Can they be called believers in the promises of Jesus if they mock the pastor promised in the Bible? If people

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are ignorant of the pastor that God has promised and are instead deceived by false pastors, there is no reason for them to even read the Bible.

We who are gathered at Shincheonji have the pastor promised by God. He is creating the new heaven and new earth (Rv 21) according to Jesus' opened book of Revelation. Today, Spiritual Israel has come to an end, roughly 2,000 years since Jesus planted the seed of heaven. It is now time for New Spiritual Israel, which is the generation of Shincheonji, to create God's kingdom on earth by harvesting the wheat-like believers (church members). It is time to serve God so that the spirit and flesh can live together as one.

ii. The fulfillment of prophecies and a new pastor

God in heaven, who is a spirit, chooses a pastor (i.e., a pastor of prophecy) through whom he reveals his plan. Before God's plans are fulfilled to become a reality in the physical world, this pastor prophesies about God's plan. In other words, God shares words of prophecy through this pastor for a certain period of time, and then, when the appointed time comes, God fulfills those prophecies.

God shares his plans regarding the future before he fulfills them so that when the time of prophetic fulfillment comes, the prophecies themselves become the pieces of evidence that convince people to believe (Jn 14:29). Believing in the prophecies without believing in their physical fulfillment is like believing in a blueprint without believing in the building that is built according to it.

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True believers believe in both the prophecies in the Bible and their fulfillment. No one who claims to believe in God without believing in both the biblical prophecies and their fulfillment is a true believer. Those who believe in God should believe in the prophecies of God and their fulfillment.

When the promised pastor comes to interpret the prophecies and testify about their physical fulfillment, people who are ignorant of the prophecies in the Bible will find his testimony very strange. Pastors who teach the Bible according to a human understanding are the most responsible for people's ignorance of the revelation of Jesus.

Today, the prophecies of the new covenant written in the New Testament are being fulfilled right before our eyes. We must understand these New Testament prophecies above all else. We must be careful not to reject the fulfillment of the prophecies or sin by disobeying God's will like the Jews did 2,000 years ago.

The people of Physical Israel believed in the Old Testament prophecies and were waiting for the Christ to come, but they ultimately refused to believe in Jesus despite the fact that he came in accordance with the Old Testament prophecies. Not only was much of Jesus' work in apparent contempt for the old traditions the Jews had received from their ancestors—traditions handed down from generation to generation—the words Jesus spoke became a stumbling block to them. It was, thus, not easy for the Jews to recognize Jesus as the Christ. He was different from what they had expected. In the midst of all this, however, it was those who

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perceived the truth behind the Old Testament prophecies that were able to believe Jesus was the Christ.

Since the time of Adam, God has consistently made prophecies, fulfilled them, and chosen a new pastor to testify about their physical fulfillment. In the same way, at the time of the second coming, after the promised events of betrayal and destruction (2 Thes 2:1-3), God will again choose a new pastor to testify about the physical fulfillment of his prophecies.

The words of prophecy written in God's sealed book are now opened. The prophecies are currently being fulfilled today. Now is the time for us to look for the new pastor, the promised pastor, who testifies about the prophecies and their physical fulfillment. Those who fail to recognize this reality, along with those who fail to seek and find the promised pastor, will be judged according to the words written in the New Testament (Jn 12:48).

G. Judgment

God destroyed his chosen people, with whom he made a covenant, whenever they betrayed him. God chose a new pastor to judge the previous generation that had sinned and then allowed his new chosen pastor and people to prosper. If God's creation and his chosen people were perfect, would he judge and destroy them before re-creating his kingdom through a new chosen pastor and a new people (Heb 8:7)?

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i. The judgment of Adam's world

(a) The judgment of Adam, Eve, and the serpent

God judged Adam and Eve, who ate the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and he judged the serpent who deceived them (Gn 3:14-19). God's judgment on the serpent forced him to crawl on his belly and eat dust all the days of his life. God also put hostility between the serpent and the woman, and between the serpent's offspring and the woman's offspring. God greatly increased the woman's pain in childbirth and made her long for her husband. Adam's judgment was that he had to rule over the woman, and that for the rest of his life he would only be able to eat from the fruit of the ground through painful toil and suffering. Ultimately, Adam returned to dust.

God banished Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden because of their sin. God sent cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life. Adam was banished from the Garden of Eden because he disobeyed God's command and because he believed in the words of the serpent—he was judged because he betrayed God.

(b) Judgment by the flood

The sons of God are born of the seed of God, while the sons of men are born of the seed of man. When the sons of God became one with the daughters of men, only mortal men were left on the earth. When the sons of God became mortal beings it was the same as when Adam, who once was a living being, became a

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mortal being after his spirit died. This happened because he had united with the serpent. At that point the Lord was grieved that he had made man on the earth. God realized how great mankind's wickedness on the earth had become and how all the thoughts of their hearts were evil. God left them when they all became mortal beings, and he determined that their lives should last no longer than 120 years. Afterward, God wiped every living thing from the earth: men and animals, creatures that moved along the ground, and the birds of the air. Noah, his family, and the creatures with him on the ark were the only ones left (Gn 6:1-7, Gn 7).

ii. The judgment of Noah's world

The judgment of Noah's generation appears in three different places in the Bible. First, Noah cursed his grandson Canaan, Ham's son, calling him a slave of his brother's slaves (Gn 9:25-27). This was after Noah learned of an incident that had taken place while he was drunk from wine and lying naked. Noah's second son Ham had told his brothers Shem and Japheth about their father's nakedness.

Second, God intervened when he noticed the descendants of Noah building the Tower of Babel. The descendants of Noah started building the Tower of Babel to make a name for themselves so that their population would not be scattered. God, however, destroyed their self-righteous aspirations by confusing their languages and scattering them over the face of the earth (Gn 11:1-9).

Third, God ultimately judged Noah's world when the descendants of Israel conquered the land of the descendants of Canaan.

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God chose the descendants of Israel (i.e., Jacob) from among the bloodline of Shem (Noah's first son). The descendants of Israel conquered the land of Canaan and destroyed its people.

iii. The judgment of Moses' world

After God judged the nation of Egypt with the plagues, Moses led the Israelites, born of the bloodline of Abraham, out of their exile in Egypt and toward the land of Canaan. The Israelites, however, refused to trust God and betrayed the word of their covenant with him, not only in the desert, but even after they entered the promised land of Canaan (Dt 32:19-22; Jer 31:31-32). Every time they sinned, God judged their deeds and punished them. From time to time, God struck them through the gentiles (e.g., the Philistines, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, etc.). This was why the Christ was finally sent into the world, but even when he arrived the descendants of Israel refused to change.

Thus, God judged and finally brought an end to Moses' corrupt world of Physical Israel and its people, the physical descendants of Abraham. God then created Jesus' world of Spiritual Israel (Jn 1:9-13). The law, the prophets, and their prophecies from Moses' world ended with John the Baptist (Mt 11:11-15).

iv. The judgment of Spiritual Israel

(a) The words of the new covenant and judgment

Since its creation, Spiritual Israel has also grown corrupt, and it must be judged according to the word of the new covenant made

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with Jesus (Jn 12:48; Mt 19:28; Rv 6). The generation of Spiritual Israel was formed through the seed of the gospel that Jesus and his disciples sowed. The word of the new covenant includes all the new commandments that Jesus gave in the New Testament. The new covenant was created because the descendants of Israel broke their covenant with God (Jer 31:32).

The new covenant, simply stated, is allowing God to put his laws in our minds and write them on our hearts. He forgives our sins and promises that we can be his people (Heb 8:10, 10:16-17). This covenant will only be kept by those who make every effort to keep it by holding to the word of God (Ex 20:6; Dt 7:9; Prv 8:32; Dt 28:1-14; Lk 11:28; Rv 1:3). At the time of Spiritual Israel's demise, believers who keep the word of the new covenant will rise to live, but those who do not keep it will rise to be condemned (Jn 5:29).

- The one who rejects me and does not accept my words has a judge; the word I have spoken will judge him at the last day. (Jn 12:48)

- Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth: In the age when all things are renewed, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Mt 19:28)

- [12]Then I looked when the Lamb opened the sixth seal, and a huge earthquake took place; the sun became as black as sackcloth made of hair, and the full moon became blood red; [13]and the stars in the sky fell to the earth like a fig tree dropping its unripe figs when shaken by a fierce wind. [14]The sky was split apart like a scroll being rolled

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up, and every mountain and island was moved from its place. ... [17]because the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to withstand it?" (Rv 6:12-17).

(b) The harvest and judgment

At the time of his first coming, Jesus sowed the seed of heaven on the earth according to Old Testament prophecy (Jer 31:27). If the seed is sown, there must be a time appointed to harvest the fruit born of that seed (Mt 13:30; Mk 4:28-29). The time of harvest is the end of the age (Mt 13:39), and the end will come when the gospel of the kingdom is preached to the whole world as a testimony to all nations (Mt 24:14).

After Jesus sowed the good seed in his field (Jesus' church), Satan sowed weeds among the wheat. These two kinds of seed have been growing together until today (Mt 13:24-30). The good seed is the word of God, and the weeds are Satan's words (Lk 8:11; Mt 13:27-28, 37-38). Thus, there are people born of the word of God and people born of the teachings of Satan within the Christian church. The wheat-like believers will be gathered and harvested into God's kingdom, but the people like weeds will be thrown into the fiery furnace (Mt 13:30, 40-42). This is the judgment of Spiritual Israel. After the harvest, everything left behind will be judged and will come to an end. This includes Jesus' field, where the seed of his word was sown, and it includes the pastors, who cared for that field. Basically, anyone who is not harvested will be judged and brought to an end.

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- Let both grow together until the harvest. At harvest time I will tell the reapers, "First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned, but then gather the wheat into my barn." (Mt 13:30)

- [40]As the weeds are collected and burned with fire, so it will be at the end of the age. [41]The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather from his kingdom everything that causes sin as well as all lawbreakers. [42]They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Mt 13:40-42)

(c) The Lord's return and judgment

Spiritual Israel will be judged and brought to an end at the time of Jesus' second coming. New Spiritual Israel is formed by those who have been victorious over the beast, his image, and the number of his name (Rv 13). They stand in front of God's throne beside the sea of glass (Rv 15:2). The people of New Spiritual Israel become the bowls of God's wrath, which judge both the gentile destroyers, and the people of Spiritual Israel for their betrayal of God (Rv 15-16).

Jesus told his disciples, "I tell you the truth: In the age when all things are renewed, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel," (Mt 19:28). This time when the "Son of Man sits on his glorious throne" is the time of Jesus' second coming. At that time the thrones that Jesus' disciples will sit on are thrones of New Spiritual Israel. The disciples will be spiritually resurrected and will judge Spiritual Israel as it faces the end of its world. According to 1 Cor 15:51-54, at the sound of the last

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trumpet, the spirits of the martyrs will be raised with imperishable spiritual bodies, and we believers will be changed by being clothed with the imperishable. At this time, the twelve disciples will be united with these changed bodies, and they will then judge the twelve tribes of Spiritual Israel.

(d) The judgment after the millennium

When the 1,000 years are over, Satan will be released from his prison to go out and deceive the nations outside the holy city. At this time, however, fire will come down from heaven to judge and consume these deceivers. There will also be a time of judgment for those who have died since the creation of the world. The dead will be judged by what is written in the books (i.e., the Bible), according to what they have done. Then death and Hades will be thrown into the lake of fire. Anyone whose name is not found written in the book of life will be thrown into the lake of fire, which is the second death. We should be able to distinguish those inside the holy city, who are doing the judging, from those outside the holy city, who will be consumed by fire and whose spirits are judged. At this time of judgment, only those who are born again of the water and the spirit inside the holy city are saved.

H. Salvation

After God judges a world that has become corrupt, he begins his work of salvation and re-creation from that world's only remaining seed.

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i. Salvation from Adam's world

The few people that God actually chooses are more important to him than anyone or anything else. This is why God destroyed the entire corrupt world of Adam—its people and everything else—but saved Noah's family of eight, who were uncontaminated by sin. Noah's family, which God spared while judging the previous and corrupt generations, was the remnant seed saved by God. They took the lead in the creation of a new world. God left Adam's world when he saw that there was no place for him in the hearts of its people, who had sinned by uniting with the serpent.

ii. Salvation from Noah's world

Abraham was the remnant seed that God saved from Noah's world when it became corrupt. Abraham was the first son of Terah (Gn 11) and was from the ninth generation since Shem, Noah's first son. God made a covenant with Abraham and his descendants, and he blessed them (Gn 15, 17). Later, Abraham became the father of many nations and the ancestor of faith according to God's promise. The twelve tribes of Israel were created through Abraham's descendant Jacob. They were Abraham's descendants, God's chosen people, and God's kingdom.

iii. Salvation from Moses' world

Even after the rebellious Israelites left Egypt and entered the land of Canaan, God destroyed them many times, either directly or indirectly using gentile nations. In the end, after the judgment

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and destruction of the Israelites, who were Abraham's descendants, God still saved a remnant seed—Jesus and his disciples (Is 1:7-9). Jesus and his disciples became the seed of creation to form a new world, the world of Spiritual Israel.

✦ [7]Your land is devastated, your cities burned with fire. Right before your eyes your crops are being destroyed by foreign invaders. They leave behind devastation and destruction. [8]Daughter Zion is left isolated, like a hut in a vineyard, or a shelter in a cucumber field; she is a besieged city. [9]If the LORD who commands armies had not left us a few survivors, we would have quickly become like Sodom, we would have become like Gomorrah. (Is 1:7-9)

iv. Salvation from Spiritual Israel

At the time of the harvest, only the wheat-like believers who are harvested by Jesus will be saved. When the end of the chosen nation of Spiritual Israel (i.e., the sun, moon, stars) comes, the wheat-like believers will be harvested to form the twelve tribes of New Spiritual Israel. There will be 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes, totaling 144,000 priests of the kingdom of New Spiritual Israel. After this, a great multitude of people wearing white robes will also be saved to become the people of the twelve tribes.

According to the book of Revelation, which concerns Jesus' second coming, the congregation members of the seven churches among which Jesus walks (Rv 1:13, 2:1) eat food sacrificed to idols, accept the teachings of the Nicolaitans, and commit sexual immorality with a prostitute (Rv 2). At this time, a few people, dressed in

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white because they did not soil their clothes, come out from Sardis to walk with Jesus (Rv 3:4). After Jesus opens the seals of the sealed scroll, he judges the congregation members of the church of the seven golden lampstands, who betrayed God. Among them, Jesus saves a quart of wheat and three quarts of barley (Rv 6:6). The quart of wheat and three quarts of barley represent a small number of these congregation members—the few people who come out of Sardis. They are the remnant seed God uses to create the twelve tribes of New Spiritual Israel.

v. Salvation in each generation

God saw that his sons had united with the daughters of men, thus becoming mere mortals, and that the earth was full of man's wickedness because every thought and inclination of their hearts was evil. For this reason, God sent the flood to destroy everything he had created (Gn 6-7). At that time, the eight people in Noah's family, which went into the ark, were the only ones who were saved.

If Adam's other descendants believed that Noah was speaking on behalf of God and believed that the time of their judgment was near, they would have repented of their evil deeds and entered Noah's ark. They probably would have hung on to Noah begging him to let them board the ark.

Surely the descendants of Noah's grandson Canaan had heard about the judgment by flood that destroyed their ancestors, the descendants of Adam that left God. Still the Canaanite tribes worshiped foreign gods and disobeyed God's commands. Later, God

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chose Joshua from among Noah's descendants to strike down the evil Canaanite people in judgment. Israel (Jacob) was born in the twelfth generation after Noah. His descendants, the Israelites, grumbled against Moses throughout their time in the desert after Moses led them out of Egypt. They did not trust or believe in God, who had selected Moses as their leader. They even promised to worship God alone after Joshua led them into the land of Canaan, but they fell into worshiping the foreign Canaanite gods.

God worked to restore his kingdom generation after generation, but his people repeatedly disappointed him, throughout biblical history. God, who knows people's true nature, decided to carry out a completely new work different from all he had previously done. He sent Jesus Christ into the world to save all of humanity.

Everyone who believes in God and in the Bible should believe in Jesus Christ because God promised to send him through the prophecies in the Bible. Although Paul was perfect with regard to the law and although no one could match his knowledge, he became a new person after receiving a revelation from heaven. He threw away everything he used to know as rubbish (Phil 3:6-12), and he ultimately died as a martyr. Paul was unable to distinguish the time before his revelation, but afterward he learned to distinguish the time and participate accordingly. He was able to find the path to salvation that was open at that time. The rest of the Israelites, Paul's contemporaries, over-emphasized the keeping of the Mosaic law, and were, therefore, unable to recognize that the savior for whom they were waiting had already come to create a new generation.

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They studied the Old Testament diligently, thinking that it would lead them to eternal life, but they were unable to recognize the pastor promised in the Old Testament prophecies.

Believers at the end of the age should look at the first coming as a mirror for their own time. They should be able to distinguish the time of the second coming. The New Testament promises one pastor who will be introduced in the last days. For more information about the promised pastor at the time of the second coming, please refer to sub-section "iii. Re-creation by Jesus during the second coming" under section "I. Re-creation."

Many people think they are saved just by believing in Jesus. Salvation, however, does not come just by calling on the name of the Lord. Salvation is given only to those who act according to God's will (Mt 7:21). Weak believers cannot understand God's will because Satan interferes. Even if they do understand, however, they cannot obey because of their weakness. True believers understand the will of God and have the proper faith at the proper time.

Ultimately, people who fail to follow the one promised pastor sent by Jesus do not really believe in Jesus (Jn 13:20). They claim to be believers, but the God they believe in is a figment of their own imaginations.

I. Re-creation

After bringing his chosen people, who have betrayed him, to an end, God works to re-create by granting salvation to a new chosen pastor and people. The process of God's re-creation is recorded in

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Gn 1. Since Adam's sin, all of God's work of re-creation has been carried out according to the logic in Gn 1.

Since the details of God's work of re-creation are well-covered in the section entitled "B. Creation of a Kingdom," this section is provided as a summary of that content.

i. Re-creation before the first coming of Jesus

Every time the world God created was corrupted, he judged and destroyed it before carrying out the work of re-creation. After God swept away Adam's world with the flood, God worked through people like Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Joshua to re-create his kingdom and people. Unfortunately, their descendants too, betrayed God and became corrupt.

ii. Re-creation by Jesus during the first coming

Spiritual Israel and the new work

Anyone who has read the Bible knows how much effort God has made to save people from sin. God forgave his people generation after generation for the sins they committed, but his people never changed. In order to finally save them, God planned an epochal event.

God planned to send his only son as a sacrifice to pay the debt of our sin. This new work, which had never happened before since the creation, is prophesied in Jer 31:22 (NIV) where it is written that "a woman will surround a man." This prophecy was fulfilled when Jesus was born of the virgin Mary.

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Jesus' birth, however, was not the only new work that appeared at that time. Jesus, who was born of the holy spirit, sowed God's seed (Jer 31:27; Mt 13:24) and made the new covenant (Jer 31:31-33; Lk 22:20). These were also part of God's new work. God's seed refers to God's word (Lk 8:11). Jesus brought Physical Israel, which was based on a physical bloodline, to an end and created Spiritual Israel. Those who accept Jesus and are born of God's seed become God's children; they become part of Spiritual Israel. Without question, this new work was a turning point in the history of mankind. Moreover, the fact that God's children are born of God's seed, which is God's word, is the most fundamental and important secret of heaven (Mt 13:10-11; Mk 4:13).

God's seed is the word because God is the word (Jn 1:1). Since God is the word, Jesus Christ, who was born of God, is also the word (1 Jn 1:1). We too, like Jesus, must be born of the seed of God's word to become God's children. We are only able to enter God's kingdom when we become God's children. Even people who believe in Jesus will remain spiritual gentiles if they are not born of God's seed and of the holy spirit. When these people claim to have received the holy spirit, there is clearly a misunderstanding. Again, as was already mentioned, God's work of re-creation that begins with Jesus is carried out through God's seed, which is his word. Just as Jacob overcame and created the twelve tribes of Physical Israel, Jesus overcame the world and sowed the seed of the gospel into people's hearts through his twelve disciples. This was the creation of Jesus' world of Spiritual Israel.

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For more information regarding the new covenant that Jesus made, please refer to the section entitled "J. The new covenant and the sabbath."

iii. Re-creation by Jesus during the second coming

(a) New Spiritual Israel

In his second coming, Jesus judges Spiritual Israel and brings it to an end because of its corruption (Rv 6). He then creates New Spiritual Israel (Rv 7, 14). Spiritual Israel has existed for roughly 2,000 years since Jesus created it by preaching the gospel of heaven, but Spiritual Israel comes to an end at the end of the age. The end of the age is also the time for harvest and the time when Jesus returns. According to Rv 7, an angel re-creates the twelve tribes by sealing the 144,000 and the great multitude wearing white robes. God spreads his tabernacle over New Spiritual Israel and lives with them for eternity.

In Revelation, Jesus announces the promised pastor, promised temple, and promised seminary that are necessary to create New Spiritual Israel.

(b) The promised pastor

The pastor that Jesus promised in the New Testament is figuratively called Apostle John in Revelation. At the second coming of the Lord, in the last days of Spiritual Israel as the prophecies of Revelation are being fulfilled, the characters mentioned in the

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prophecies will actually appear in reality. At that time, the promised pastor, who comes in the position of Apostle John, will testify about the prophecies in Revelation and about their fulfillment according to what he has seen and heard (Rv 1:1-3, 22:6-8).

According to Rv 2-3, the promised pastor will fight and overcome the Nicolaitans, who are a synagogue of Satan. After he has overcome, he will receive many blessings from Jesus. These include the fruit from the tree of life, the crown of life, the hidden manna, a white stone, authority over the nations, and the morning star. The promised pastor's name will be written in the book of life. He will become a pillar in the temple of God, and the name of God, the new name of Jesus, and the name of the holy city New Jerusalem will be written on him. He will get to sit on Jesus' throne. He will also, according to the prophecies in Rv 10, eat the scroll Jesus opens and prophesy again to many peoples, nations, languages, and kings.

Jesus, who was the pastor promised in the Old Testament, introduced himself by calling himself the bread that comes from heaven. He told the people that anyone who eats of his bread will live forever (Jn 6:27-40). Since Jesus was life itself, his words were the "food at the proper time" that believers had to eat at the time of the first coming. The pastor promised in the New Testament will receive the fruit from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God, and he will receive the hidden manna. These are the food at the proper time at the time of the end.

When the pastor promised in the Old Testament came, believers had to know both the true God and Jesus Christ to gain eternal life

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(Jn 5:39, 17:3). When the end of the age (i.e., the time of the second coming of Jesus) comes, it is no longer enough just to know God and Jesus. Believers must also know the pastor promised in the New Testament.

All other pastors, in charge of caring for sheep, are general pastors in the same position as the Jewish pastors (leaders) at the time of the first coming. When the promised pastor comes, these general pastors should hand the sheep they have cared for over to him. If the general pastors persecute the promised pastor because they do not want to give up their sheep, just like the Jewish pastors did in the first coming, they will not be able to escape judgment.

(c) The promised temple

Just because a church has a cross on it and claims to believe in Jesus does not make it the church promised in the Bible. General churches, which are not the promised church, have names created by men and hold services that convey a man-made gospel.

When and where, then, does the temple God promised in the New Testament appear? The promised temple appears along with the rest of the revealed physical fulfillment. This occurs when the sealed book (Rv 5:1-3) is opened—when the prophecies regarding the secrets of heaven, which had been hidden up to that point, are fulfilled. According to Rv 15:5, the name of this promised place is the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony.

The Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony is the place (Rv 15:2-5) where the people who are victorious over the beast, his image, and the number of his name (Rv 13) gather. They testify

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about the prophecies in Revelation and about their physical fulfillment. All nations come to this place to worship, because God, Jesus, and all the angels are there (Rv 15:4, 14:1-3). True believers will come and worship in the temple where God resides.

(d) The promised seminary

The only theological seminary Jesus promised is the place where the pastor, who eats the scroll opened by Jesus (Rv 10), teaches the words of that scroll without cost according to the Bible (Rv 21:6). Revelation 14:1-5 calls this place Mt. Zion. This is where the 144,000, who have received the seal of God and Jesus, learn to sing the new song before the four living creatures and the elders. This new song announces both the New Testament prophecies and their physical fulfillment. This new song is the same as the new wine that Jesus, while he was establishing the new covenant with his disciples, promised to drink anew in the coming kingdom of God (Mt 26:26-29; Lk 22:14-20).

J. The new covenant and the sabbath

i. The new covenant

(a) The new covenant before Jesus

God made a covenant with his chosen people in every generation since the time of Adam. Whenever the people broke the covenant, God selected a new pastor and chosen people with whom to make a covenant. For example, when Adam broke his covenant

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with God, God selected Noah and made a covenant with him. If the covenant made with Adam was the old covenant, the covenant made with Noah was the new covenant. When God saw, however, that Noah's world had also become corrupt, God chose Abraham and made a covenant with him. The covenant made with Abraham then became the new covenant. This was repeated throughout the time of Moses and Joshua until the time of Jesus' first coming.

As mentioned above, calling a covenant *new* means there must have been a covenant made before it. God had to set up a new covenant in every generation because his people broke the covenant they made with God in every generation.

(b) Jesus' new covenant

After seeing the Israelites break their covenant with him every time he made one, God was determined to set up a new covenant, which was completely different from the previous ones (Jer 31:31-34). Jeremiah prophesied about the new covenant saying that God would write his laws directly in people's hearts. Unlike the covenants God made with the Israelites in the past that were based on the concept "If you do this for me, I will give this to you," in the new covenant God was willing to do something directly for his people. This new covenant was established 600 years later through Jesus, who was born of the seed of the holy spirit (Lk 22:20).

✥ 31"Indeed, a time is coming," says the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah. 32It will not be like the old covenant that I made with their ancestors when I delivered them

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> from Egypt. For they violated that covenant, even though I was like a faithful husband to them," says the Lord. [33]"But I will make a new covenant with the whole nation of Israel after I plant them back in the land," says the Lord. "I will put my law within them and write it on their hearts and minds. I will be their God and they will be my people. [34]"People will no longer need to teach their neighbors and relatives to know me. For all of them, from the least important to the most important, will know me," says the Lord. "For I will forgive their sin and will no longer call to mind the wrong they have done." (Jer 31:31-34)

Believers who have God's law (i.e., his word) written in their hearts and minds act according to and keep the words of the new covenant established by Jesus.

The new covenant, which Jesus established, is applicable to the people after Jesus' time. People who believe in Jesus must keep the words of the New Testament that Jesus has given us. At the time of the Lord's second coming, which is when Spiritual Israel comes to an end, people will be divided between judgment and salvation depending on whether or not they keep the words of the new covenant. This happens because judgment will be carried out according to Jesus' words (Jn 12:48).

The people of Physical Israel (i.e., the chosen people) did not recognize the Christ, who came according to the prophecies, because they did not put the prophecies of the Old Testament in their hearts and minds. Therefore, only believers who have written the content of the New Testament in their hearts and minds

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according to the new covenant will be able to receive the Lord at the second coming (Heb 8:7-11; Rv 14:1-6). They will attain salvation by seeing and believing the fulfillment of the prophecies when God's sealed scroll is opened.

(c) The new covenant with New Spiritual Israel

Out of all the promises Jesus made in the New Testament, the prophecies of Rv 2-3 represent the covenant made with the pastor and congregation members living at the time those prophecies are fulfilled. Those who keep the promises recorded in Rv 2-3 are blessed according to what is written, but those who do not keep the promises are cursed.

After Jesus fulfills the covenant he made with Spiritual Israel, he makes a new covenant with New Spiritual Israel. What are some of the details of this covenant? According to this new covenant, the river of life will flow from the throne of God and of the Lamb, and the tree of life will grow next to the river. The tree of life will bear twelve kinds of fruit every month, and all nations will be healed. The eternal gospel will be proclaimed. When the millennium is over, Satan will try to deceive people again, but the holy city and everyone inside it will be safe. Then, God's final judgment will take place.

ii. The sabbath

When does the creation of heaven and earth begin and end? Where is it fulfilled? When and where does God enter his rest?

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Regardless of how major or minor biblical events may seem, everything recorded in all 66 books of the Bible has been constantly marching forward like an unchanging wind or like the relentless waves of the ocean. Since people live such short, useless lives that often end in suffering, many wonder if it may have been better if they were never born. If that is the case, when and from where do peace and rest come? No matter how long you gaze into the sky, it will remain silent. The mountains and trees will say nothing.

God the creator has given us the Bible, but no matter how long we look at it we do not understand what it is telling us to do. We do not understand how to act or where to go. This is, of course, very frustrating.

For whom did the countless martyrs shed their blood over the 6,000 years that have passed since Adam's time? No one can see or hear God's word because all people are tainted by and immersed in sin. Everyone is in the same state—from doctors of theology and pastors, to elders and laypeople. Are there any truly living beings? People often complain that pastors exercise their ecclesiastical authority under false pretenses, serving themselves while claiming to be working for Jesus. They quarrel with one another and grow rich at the expense of their congregation members. This sort of evil behavior cannot really be considered religion. When considering cases like this the world of nonbelievers often seems better than the Christian world. Can the current corrupted Christian world be considered a true religion? Its people are crying out for another reformation.

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Creation and the sabbath

God, who created the spiritual realm, also created the physical realm over six days, and rested on the seventh. His rest was broken, however, by Adam's sin. If Adam and those who came after him had not sinned, God would have still been resting to this day.

Reflecting on the past 6,000 years of biblical history since Adam's sin, it is clear that every time God's chosen pastor and people became corrupt, God judged them and brought them to an end. Afterward, God always selected a new pastor and created a new world through him. People have continuously disobeyed God ever since the sabbath was broken in Adam's time. This is why God was never able to rest and why he had to repeatedly carry out the work of re-creation.

During the first coming, Jesus said, "My Father is working until now, and I too am working ... the Son can do nothing on his own initiative, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise," (Jn 5:17-20). Jesus healed people, judged people, made people rise from their graves, preached the gospel, and brought believers to repentance—all on the sabbath. Jesus' words and actions seemed to run counter to the Jewish people's long-held beliefs and traditions, which prohibited work on the sabbath at all costs. The Jews did not properly understand God's will nor did they understand the work God had been doing to that point. They thought faithfully keeping the letter of the law, which was to keep the sabbath holy, was more important than the

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truth. They persecuted Jesus because he walked on a different path of faith than they did.

Jesus' words, however, were true. Ever since Adam's fall, God has been carrying out the work of re-creation. He chose, each in turn, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, and Jesus to fulfill his promised covenant. How could God have rested until everything was complete? We now know that the first coming was not even the end of God's work. God must still fulfill all the prophecies of the New Testament as well.

When the prophecies in Rv 21 about the renewal of all things through the creation of Shincheonji are fulfilled, the work of re-creation, which has been carried out repeatedly according to the logic recorded in Gn 1, comes to an end. When the work of re-creation is completed, God will rest from all his work and enter into the eternal sabbath. At that time, the people of God will also enter genuine sabbath rest.

Paul made it clear that the Israelites could not enter the sabbath because of their disobedience. He also encouraged us to make every effort to enter the sabbath because God had set a certain day for the sabbath to begin (Heb 4:4-11). That day comes when Rv 21:5-6 is fulfilled.

✦ [4]For he has spoken somewhere about the seventh day in this way: "And God rested on the seventh day from all his works," [5]but to repeat the text cited earlier: "They will never enter my rest!" [6]Therefore it remains for some to enter it, yet those to whom it was previously proclaimed did not enter because of disobedience. [7]So God again

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ordains a certain day, "Today," speaking through David after so long a time, as in the words quoted before, "O, that today you would listen as he speaks! Do not harden your hearts." [8]For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken afterward about another day. [9]Consequently a Sabbath rest remains for the people of God. [10]For the one who enters God's rest has also rested from his works, just as God did from his own works. [11]Thus we must make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by following the same pattern of disobedience. (Heb 4:4-11)

✦ [5]And the one seated on the throne said: "Look! I am making all things new!" Then he said to me, "Write it down, because these words are reliable and true." [6]He also said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the one who is thirsty I will give water free of charge from the spring of the water of life." (Rv 21:5-6)

When God created heaven and earth, he did not create a world of wickedness; he created paradise. God's paradise, however, was filled with agony, sorrow, and death because of Satan's scheming. The true sabbath cannot exist until the world, which is ruled by Satan, is judged, and paradise is re-created. God must return everything to its original state. Let us work with God and enter the sabbath together.

After Adam's fall, no one—not even Noah, Abraham, or Moses—could renew all of creation according to God's plan. People were bound by God's commandments and laws, but they kept them as

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a mere formality. They were not able to surpass the limitations of man. How could this be considered a restoration?

In order to restore mankind to the state where each person possesses God's character, everyone must be born again of God's seed and spirit. God's seed refers to the word of God that Jesus proclaimed. God's word creates and restores people's souls into God's character. Those who are created by God's word are led by God's spirit and are born again to become a completely new creation.

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Part 3

A Summary and Explanation of the Book of Revelation

The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must happen very soon. He made it clear by sending his angel to his servant John, who then testified to everything that he saw concerning the word of God and the testimony about Jesus Christ. Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy aloud, and blessed are those who hear and obey the things written in it, because the time is near! (Rv 1:1-3)

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Introduction to Revelation

Revelation is about future events that Jesus showed to Apostle John roughly 2,000 years ago in the form of a vision while John was exiled on the Island of Patmos in Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey). Jesus promised to fulfill the prophecies of Revelation as written, without adding or subtracting anything. When the prophecies are fulfilled, a pastor like Apostle John in Revelation testifies to what he has seen and heard concerning the physical fulfillment. The book of Revelation figuratively uses Apostle John to prophesy about the promised pastor (Hos 12:10).

There are several things people should know before reading Revelation.

- Revelation 1:1-8 is a summary and conclusion of all the chapters of Revelation, which give the details of the events that John saw and heard.
- The main discourse begins in Rv 1:9.
- The events of the entire book begin with the appearance of the seven messengers, who act as the lamp that prepares the way.
- Revelation uses the names of people and places from the Old Testament figuratively.
- It is possible to distinguish what happens before a given event from what happens after it by using words like "after this" and "then."

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- The events of Revelation occur in a logical order: betrayal of the chosen people, then destruction, and then salvation.
- There are three mysteries in Revelation: the mystery of the seven stars and seven golden lampstands, the mystery of the beast with seven heads and ten horns, and the mystery of the seventh trumpet.
- There are three sets of plagues in Revelation: the plagues of the seven seals, the seven trumpets, and the seven bowls.
- Revelation is about two battles between God and Satan.
- The one who fights and is victorious becomes Israel and creates the twelve tribes. Those who are defeated flee in seven ways. This is the evidence that testifies about the one who overcomes and those who are defeated.
- Just as the point of the Old Testament was to proclaim Jesus Christ as the promised pastor (Jn 5:39), the events of betrayal and destruction in the prophecies of the New Testament exist to testify about the promised pastor who acts as the savior.
- The events written in Rv 1, 2, and 3 are fulfilled in a specific order. First, the seven messengers work as a lamp that prepares the way. Then, the Nicolaitans, who belong to Satan, invade the tabernacle of the seven golden lampstands. Finally, Jesus chooses Apostle John to send letters to the seven messengers.

According to Revelation, which is the very last content of the Bible to be fulfilled, God's creation is finished when the holy city

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of the spiritual realm, New Jerusalem, descends upon and unites with the new heaven and the new earth (Shincheonji). Therefore, it is not an exaggeration to say that God's ultimate purpose in giving us the 66 books of the Bible was to lead us to the new heaven and new earth—to Shincheonji. God's work of re-creation and restoration, which has been carried out repeatedly since Adam's fall, comes to an end with the creation of Shincheonji. When God finishes all his work, he will rest in Shincheonji forever (Rv 21:1-6).

Just like the first coming, the second coming begins with the work of the lamp that prepares the way for the Lord. Jesus, who is returning, chooses and anoints one pastor (Rv 1:17). Jesus reveals to his pastor the scene of the Nicolaitans invading and corrupting the church of the seven golden lampstands. Jesus tells his pastor to send letters on his behalf to the seven messengers of the seven churches (Rv 2-3).

Amos 3:7 says, "Certainly the sovereign Lord does nothing without first revealing his plan to his servants the prophets." According to this scripture, Jesus reveals the events of Revelation to John before fulfilling them. Jesus guides John in the role of speaking and acting on his behalf.

After John delivers Jesus' letters to the seven messengers, he goes up to the spiritual heaven through the inspiration of the holy spirit (Rv 4) just like Jesus did in his first coming (Jn 3:13). John sees God's throne and the spirits that surround it. He hears that God will soon come to the earth (Rv 4:1-8). John then sees all the events that must take place before they actually happen.

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God's ultimate goal, which is salvation and creation, is completed when all the chapters of Revelation are fulfilled. Therefore, all believers must seek the promised pastor who receives from heaven the opened book of Revelation and who testifies about its prophecies and their fulfillment.

The following is a summary and explanation of Revelation. For a more detailed explanation, please refer to the book *The Secrets of Heaven: The Physical Fulfillment of Revelation*. Today, all believers who study the New Testament in hopes of entering the kingdom of heaven should also hope that Revelation will be fulfilled. The main character serving the Lord in the book of Revelation (Rv 11:3-4) is the one who overcomes—the one who is promised in Rv 2-3. The first step for believers wishing to attain their hope is seeking the promised pastor who overcomes according to the book of Revelation.

Although Jesus came approximately 2,000 years ago to fulfill the Old Testament and then testify about that fulfillment, Physical Israel is still unable to believe to this day. Jesus asked if he would find faith on the earth (Lk 18:8) when he returns to fulfill the New Testament. I pray that believers with understanding of this passage will not persist in unbelief like Physical Israel. Instead, I pray that all believers will verify the truth of the prophecies and their fulfillment. I pray that they will all believe and be saved.

Shincheonji Church of Jesus—The Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony—is testifying (by answering the questions who, what, when, where, why, and how) the manner in which the prophecies

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of the New Testament, including the book of Revelation, have been fulfilled today exactly as promised.

Revelation 1:1-8

Revelation 1:1-8 is a simple conclusion of what Apostle John saw and heard, which is all the events of Revelation. The content, which John recorded from Rv 1:9 to Rv 22, is the revelation of Jesus Christ that must soon take place.

The word revelation means *to open and show*. There are two kinds of revelation: revelation through vision and revelation through physical fulfillment. Revelation through vision is prophecy, which shows the events of the future before they occur. Revelation through physical fulfillment shows the actual reality promised in the prophecies after the prophecies are fulfilled. About 2,000 years ago, the things Apostle John saw when he went to heaven via the inspiration of the holy spirit were part of a vision. They were not the actual reality of the prophecies.

God gave the book, which records the events of what must soon take place (i.e., the events of Revelation), to Jesus (Rv 5). After Jesus broke all seven seals of the book (Rv 6:1), he gave it to an angel. The angel then gave the book to John (Rv 10). John, as is recorded in the book itself, made the word of God and the events of Revelation, which he had seen, known to God's servants (Rv 10, 1:1-2). These servants are the 144,000 people of the twelve tribes, who have God's seal, and also the great multitude clothed in white (Rv 7). According to this detailed process of how the book is passed on,

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the servants cannot receive the revelation of Jesus Christ directly from God and Jesus. Instead, it is only through John that the servants are able to receive it. This same thing occurred when God, through Jesus, fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies, which he had shown the prophets in visions. Jesus then showed his disciples the physical fulfillment of those prophecies (Mt 13:16-17).

The Bible says the advocate, the holy spirit of truth, will make believers remember everything Jesus said by teaching them the words of Jesus (Jn 14:26). The angel, who receives the revelation from Jesus and gives it to John, is the spirit of prophecy[1] (Rv 19:10), the holy spirit of truth, and the advocate. John is an instrument that speaks on behalf of the spiritual advocate, and therefore, he is the advocate here in the physical world.

In every generation, God always warned his people before fulfilling future events. He always prophesied before fulfilling his prophecies. He did this to provide us with evidence that allows us to believe that it was him who accomplished that work of fulfillment (Jn 14:29). When God fulfills the secret promises, he always reveals them to his chosen pastor before fulfilling them (Am 3:7; Jn 5:19).

Prophecies act as evidence for their own physical fulfillment. No one can know the fulfillment of God's prophecies, even after it has come, without first understanding the prophecies themselves. When reading prophecy or verifying its fulfillment, one must inquire precisely according to the questions who, what, when,

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1 – The Korean Bible uses the words *daeyeonae young* (대언의 영), which refers to a spirit who speaks on behalf of someone else.

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where, why, and how. Anyone who fails to acknowledge the physical fulfillment when it comes according to prophecy proves that he or she does not believe in God, Jesus, or the Bible.

Believers in the time of the New Testament must know the pastor promised in the New Testament. Just as God came to Jesus, who was the pastor promised in the Old Testament, and fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies through him, Jesus will come to the pastor promised in the New Testament and fulfill the New Testament prophecies through him. The promised pastor is the pastor who, in the last days, takes the role of Apostle John in Revelation. Believers on whom the end of the age has come must find and unite with the pastor Jesus promised.

Blessed are those who obey the words written in this book (Rv 1:3, 22:7). Some key points in Revelation are: the holy city New Jerusalem in heaven; the new heaven and new earth upon which New Jerusalem descends and unites; the first heaven, first earth, and the sea that pass away; the twelve tribes that are created by receiving God's seal; the tree of life that produces twelve kinds of fruit every month; the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; the beast with seven heads and ten horns; and the mark of the beast (666).

The prophecies of Revelation that were sealed in figurative language are being physically fulfilled today. A pastor in the position of Apostle John saw and heard their physical fulfillment. He is testifying to the true identity of the fulfilled prophecies (Jn 16:25).

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As was mentioned in the beginning, blessed are those who obey the word of Revelation, which records the revelation of Jesus Christ. This blessing is to become God's kingdom and priests and to reside with the returning Lord (Jn 14:20, 23). Since the prophecies of Revelation and the things God has spoken have been fulfilled, the words Alpha and Omega—the beginning and the end—are finally fulfilled. Amen.

Let us find out more about the contents of the entire book of Revelation.

Revelation 1:9-20

The Roman emperor persecuted John for his belief in Jesus Christ and banished him to the Island of Patmos. While on the island, John saw Jesus by the inspiration of the holy spirit. Jesus anointed him (Rv 1:17) and John heard about the mystery of the seven stars and the seven golden lampstands. Jesus commanded John to write "what [he] saw, what is, and what will be after these things" in a book and to send it to the messengers of the seven churches. What John saw refers to Jesus, the seven golden lampstands, and the seven stars. "What is" refers to the acts of the seven stars and the Nicolaitans. "What will be after these things" refers to when the one who has overcome the Nicolaitans receives what Jesus promised.

Some people say that Revelation is not a prophecy that will be fulfilled in the future; they call it an epistle sent to seven churches at that time. They also claim that the biggest mistake Shincheonji makes is teaching that Revelation is a book of prophecy instead

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of an epistle. If the seven messengers of the seven churches—the recipients of the letters recorded in Revelation—were the messengers and churches at that time, why would Jesus have said that the seven messengers and the seven lampstands are a mystery? Revelation is certainly a prophetic revelation that must be fulfilled in the future.

When we realize that Jesus anoints only John, tells only John the mystery of the seven stars and the seven golden lampstands, and makes John alone speak and act on his behalf, it is clear that John is not a general pastor. He is the promised pastor.

The seven stars—one of Revelation's three mysteries—are the seven messengers who prepare the way for the Lord's second coming. During his first coming, Jesus first revealed his identity at the temple of John the Baptist (Mt 3:13-15). In order to carry out his work at his second coming, Jesus comes to the tabernacle (church) of the seven golden lampstands, where the seven messengers are working. These seven messengers are called seven stars because they are pastors belonging to God, who is in heaven. The seven golden lampstands are like the seven lamps that were in Moses' tabernacle. They are symbolic of the seven spirits in front of God's throne in the spiritual world (Rv 4:5). The seven spirits work together with the seven messengers. The seven golden lampstands are called the seven churches because the hearts of the seven messengers where the seven spirits dwell are the temple of God. This is the same as Jesus referring to his body as the temple. Since the seven stars are in Jesus' hand, it is clear that Jesus is working

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through them. They, however, did not know that they were the seven stars described in Rv 1-3, just as John the Baptist did not know that he was Elijah, the messenger who prepared the way for the Lord. Apostle John, on the other hand, knew who they were, because Jesus told him the secret.

The seven messengers in Rv 1 and the seven heads in Rv 17 belong to different groups. The beast with the seven heads and ten horns in Rv 17 represents the pastors of Babylon, the kingdom of demons. The angel called this a mystery as well.

The events of Revelation begin with the appearance of the seven messengers in this chapter. If they do not appear, the Nicolaitans, who belong to Satan, do not appear, Jesus does not come, the events in Revelation are not fulfilled, and the prophecies remain sealed. After Jesus prepares the way using the seven messengers, he fulfills the promised prophecies of Revelation. Believers must, therefore, find the church of the seven golden lampstands, which is the tabernacle that prepares the way for the Lord, to know the truth about Revelation.

Today, Rv 1:9-20 has already been fulfilled.

Revelation 2-3

The names of actual people and geographic locations from biblical history are used figuratively in Rv 2-3.

John recorded Revelation 2,000 ago in Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey), but because Revelation is a prophecy, this is a figurative geographic location. When Revelation is fulfilled, the fulfillment

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does not take place in that location, nor are the people of that location the ones who fulfill the prophecies. The letters of Rv 2-3, which are the revelation of Jesus Christ, were sent within a vision (a prophecy) while John was under the inspiration of the holy spirit, and therefore, no one actually received the letters at that time. The messenger of the church of Ephesus was Apostle John. Why would John send a letter to himself and tell himself to repent? When this prophecy is physically fulfilled, however, the recipient is a pastor of a church to whom the letter is applicable. In addition, it is clear that the names of all the people and geographic locations that are mentioned (e.g., the Nicolaitans, Balaam, Balak, Jezebel, Antipas, the church in Ephesus, the church in Laodicea, and the rest of the seven churches) are all figurative. Some of the names mentioned (i.e., Balaam, Balak, and Jezebel) are even drawn from the Old Testament.

The people (destroyers), who are figuratively referred to as the Nicolaitans, have invaded the church of the seven messengers who prepared the way and have acted according to the prophecies recorded in Rv 2-3. Also, as recorded in Rv 2:10, a few people from the church of the seven messengers were put on probation and bound in prison (Babylon[2]). In other words, they were bound within the organization of the destroyers. In Rv 2:12-17, Jesus asks the pastor, who is figuratively referred to as the messenger of the church in Pergamum, to be as faithful and loyal as Antipas of the

2 – There is a footnote on Rv 18:2 in the Korean Bible that equates Babylon to a prison.

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church in Pergamum 2,000 years ago. In fact, today, as the prophecies are being fulfilled, there was a person who was spiritually put to death just like Antipas was 2,000 years ago. I will not mention this person's real name because doing so could lead to a lawsuit.

After being anointed by Jesus, John was commanded to write letters to the seven messengers of the seven churches on Jesus' behalf. The content of those letters can be summarized in that Jesus will give blessings to the one who battles against and overcomes the invaders, who are the Nicolaitans and the organization of Satan. The one who overcomes receives many blessings: the food of eternal life; the crown of life; the stone for judgment; the iron scepter to rule over the nations; the inscription of God's name, the name of the holy city New Jerusalem that comes down from heaven, and Jesus' new name; and the right to sit together with Jesus on Jesus' throne.

The Nicolaitans, which are the organization of Satan in Rv 2-3, are similar to the serpent that deceived Adam and Eve. The Nicolaitans made the church of the seven golden lampstands eat food sacrificed to idols and made them listen to Satan's teachings. This is spiritually identical to the way in which the serpent tricked Adam and Eve into eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and committing sexual immorality with Satan.

All believers must find the one who overcomes—the pastor promised in Rv 2-3—in order to attain heaven and eternal life. Everyone who asks, seeks, and knocks will be able to receive it (Mt 7:7-8). Now is the time, since the prophecies are being fulfilled,

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when everyone must find the promised pastor and the place he appears. Anyone, who dallies in accomplishing this task or who interferes with someone else, proves that they belong to the devil (Mt 5:10-12, 23:13).

Since the letters in Rv 2-3 were written as a result of a revelation through vision, they are different from the epistles. When John recorded Revelation, the seven churches in Asia Minor never received the letters in Rv 2-3 from John. When Revelation is fulfilled, those letters are given to the seven messengers of the tabernacle of the covenant, which is symbolized by the seven churches of Asia Minor.

These events of Rv 2-3, including the delivery of the letters, have already taken place at the base of Cheonggye mountain, which is in the city of Gwacheon, Gyeonggi province, Republic of Korea.

Revelation 4

Apostle John, who wrote the letters to the seven messengers, was again in the spirit and was called up to the spiritual world. "After these things," which refers to the writing of the letters, John saw and heard what must take place on the earth. He saw God's throne and organization, and he heard that the throne will descend to the earth in the future.

According to the testimony of John, the 24 elders who surround God's throne are sitting on 24 thrones. The spirits of the seven lamps are in front of God's throne. The four living creatures are in

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the center and surrounding the throne, and it says the four living creatures are covered with eyes in the front and back.

In this chapter, although John says the four living creatures look like a lion, an ox, a man, and an eagle, that is not their real appearance. According to Ezekiel, each of the four living creatures had the face of a man in the front, with the face of a lion on the right, the face of an ox on the left, and the face of an eagle on the back. If these two passages are put together, it is clear that each of the four living creatures has four faces. The prophet Ezekiel saw all four sides of the four living creatures, while John only saw one side of each of the living creatures that face each of the four directions.

The eyes under and all around the four living creatures are God's many angels (Rv 4:6-8, 5:11). Thus, the many angels in front of God's throne are organized into four groups. These are called "cherubim" in Ez 10. In Gn 3, God banishes Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden and tells these cherubim to guard the way to the tree of life.

The 24 elders John saw take care of the administrative affairs of God's kingdom. The spirits of the seven lamps are sent out into all the earth to act as God's eyes (Rv 5:6), and, as such, they are the entities that speak God's word on God's behalf. The four living creatures are the archangels who lead the many angels that comprise the army of God's kingdom. According to the prophecy of Rv 21:1-2, all the spirits that make up this throne of God will descend on Shincheonji, which is where the one who overcomes can be found.

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Revelation 5

Apostle John, who is taken up to the spiritual world, sees a book[3] sealed with seven seals in the right hand of God, who is sitting on his throne (Is 29:9-14; Rv 5:1-4). One of the elders tells him that Jesus, the Lamb, is able to open the book with the seven seals because he overcame. According to the elder's statement, Jesus, the Lamb with seven eyes (spirits) and seven horns, takes the book from the hand of God with the intention of opening its seven seals (Rv 5:7).

The 24 elders and the four living creatures fall down to worship and sing the new song. The content of the new song is recorded in Rv 5:9-10, which says that Jesus, through his blood, purchased for God persons from every tribe, language, people, and nation. He appointed them as a kingdom and priests to serve God and reign forever on Earth. When the thousands upon thousands of angels and all that God created praise the Lamb, who bore the cross to give salvation to mankind, the four living creatures say "Amen" and the 24 elders fall down to worship.

Jesus is able to open the sealed book because he overcame the world, and in doing so he overcame Satan (Jn 16:33; Rv 5:5). If Jesus had not overcome Satan, then he would not be able to open the sealed book and fulfill its contents.

When the sealed book in God's hand is opened, what kind of changes will there be in the Christian world? All pastors became blind and deaf when God's book of revelation was sealed. They

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3 – The Korean Bible, similar to the KJV, calls this a book, not a scroll.

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were, thus, only able to teach according to the teachings of men. People were far from God's heart (Is 29:9-13, 42:18-20). When God's book is opened, however, the prophecies written in Revelation are explained and the physical fulfillment of the prophecies appears. People can understand the prophecies, see their physical fulfillment, and believe. Until Jesus, who overcame, opens all the seals of the sealed book and fulfills its prophecies, all people are under the teachings of men. Today's generation was also like this until the seventh seal of Rv 8 was opened.

The new song (Rv 5:8-10), sung by the four living creatures and the 24 elders, is the song the 144,000 people, who gather at Mt. Zion, learn and sing. Revelation 14:1-5 says the 144,000 people sing the new song before the throne, the four living creatures, and the 24 elders. The new song they sing is the word of the prophecies written in the opened book and the testimony about their physical fulfillment. This physical fulfillment must occur according to the prophecies.

Revelation 6

Jesus takes the sealed book and opens the seven seals one by one to fulfill what is written in the book. Every time Jesus opens a seal, the four living creatures in front of the throne gather the soldiers of heaven's army, which are represented by horses. Hence, the four archangels gather their angels in response to the words of Jesus.

The horses that appear every time the four living creatures call the angels in Rv 6 seem to come alone, but these are actually many

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horses. Zechariah 6 describes them as groups of white horses, red horses, black horses, and pale horses. Jesus leads the four living creatures, and according to Rv 19:11, Jesus rides among the armies of heaven on a white horse.

These four living creatures judge the seven pastors and their people at the church of the seven golden lampstands. They are judged because they refused to repent even after receiving the letters from Jesus. They ate food sacrificed to idols and the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. They also committed sexual immorality with gentile gods. The four living creatures even bring the beasts of the earth to kill a fourth of the chosen people who betrayed.

The sun, moon, and stars in this chapter refer to the chosen people who betrayed (Gn 37:9-11). God's chosen people began with the holy spirit, but they were deceived. They fell from heaven to the earth (i.e., they went back to being considered gentiles) and were destroyed. This destruction is described as the sky rolling up, the sun and moon going dark, the stars falling to the earth, and the earth (flesh) being removed from its place (i.e., becoming a possession of the gentiles). Just as Adam was banished from the Garden of Eden, the church of the seven golden lampstands left God. They became a possession of a gentile denomination and its pastors, who are referred to as the caves and rocks of the mountains.

The horses in this chapter are different from the horses in Rv 9. The horses in this chapter belong to God, but the horses in Rv 9 belong to the devil. The horses of Rv 9 belong to the same group

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as the Nicolaitans in Rv 2-3 and the beast with seven heads and ten horns in Rv 13. When John went up to the spiritual world in Rv 4, he did not see horses; he saw only spirits. The horses in this chapter are flesh, but their riders are spirits. Just as a prince of this world goes out to war, Jesus is one of the riders of the white horses in Rv 19:11-16.

In the midst of the judgment in Rv 6, a small group is chosen by God and referred to as one quart of wheat and three quarts of barley. They are the remnant that becomes the seed used to create a new world.

The events, which began in Rv 5 and continue into Rv 6, were fulfilled at the base of Cheonggye mountain in Gwacheon.

Revelation 7

The events of Rv 7 occur after the events of Rv 6, in which the chosen people who betrayed are judged. In Rv 7:1, the four angels must delay the judgment by holding back the winds, which are elsewhere represented by horses. At that time, another angel comes up from the east—from where the sun rises—and says, "Do not damage the earth or the sea or the trees until we have put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God."

In this passage, the angel with the seal of the living God comes up from the east. Since the east is where the sun rises, it represents the location of the pastor who is like the light in Gn 1. Some people claim that the east in this chapter is east of Israel (i.e., some part of Iraq). That is a mistake, however, both because there is no place

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the sun fails to rise, and because Earth is a sphere. The actual location of the east, the place the sun rises, and the ends of the earth depends on where a person is standing.

Since Ps 84:11 calls God our sun, the place God's work begins can be thought of as the place the sun rises. In the end times for the Christian world, the sun, moon, and stars darken and fall. Day becomes night. At that time, wherever the work of God (the light) begins is referred to as the east. Thus, when the east is mentioned in Rv 7, it is not referring to the geographic direction that normally comes to people's minds. This east must be figuratively understood.

The east in Rv 7 is the east from the viewpoint of heaven (Rv 4), and it is where the events of Revelation are fulfilled. This is Mt. Zion where the 144,000 are sealed with God's seal (Rv 14:1-3). There is no rule excluding Korea from being the place where the sun rises. There is no scripture that proves Korea cannot be the place where the sun rises. Apostle John, who was called up to the spiritual heaven, knows where the east is since he saw it from heaven.

Since the word is God (Jn 1:1), the seal engraved with God's name is also God's word. People who are sealed with God's seal are acknowledged as God's possession because they have written God's word in their hearts and minds. God's seal is his mark. A person's official mark is their signature. When someone puts their signature on a document, the signature is that person's name. At the time of Revelation's fulfillment, there are 144,000 people sealed with God's seal—12,000 from each tribe.

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Revelation 14:1 mentions the 144,000 people gathered at Mt. Zion who have the names of God and the Lamb written on their foreheads. This means they have been sealed with the word of God and Jesus. People are sealed by God and Jesus when they hear and acknowledge that the word of revelation, which comes from God and Jesus, is true. God promised that in setting up the new covenant he would write his laws in believers' hearts and minds (Heb 8:10).

When the angels finish sealing the foreheads of the 144,000, a great multitude dressed in white robes comes from every nation, tribe, people, and language.

God brings the first heaven and earth to an end by judging Spiritual Israel (Rv 5). After judging his chosen people and bringing them to an end, God creates a new chosen people. He establishes New Spiritual Israel with the 144,000 who are sealed and with the great multitude dressed in white robes. God spreads his tabernacle over New Spiritual Israel and dwells among them forever. At the time of Revelation's fulfillment, anyone who does not belong to the twelve tribes of New Spiritual Israel, which are God's only chosen people, is a gentile who cannot be saved.

There is, however, a significant difference between the 144,000 and those who belong to the great multitude in white. In Rv 7:9, the words "after these things" provide a way to distinguish the different status of the 144,000 sealed with God's seal and the multitude in white that come out of the great tribulation. As the firstfruits, the 144,000 become the pastors (i.e., priests and kings) of New Spiritual Israel. The great multitude in white become its

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congregation members (i.e., its people). The order in which they are chosen by God is also different; the 144,000 are chosen first and the great multitude in white are chosen later.

The event of sealing described in Rv 7 is being fulfilled today in Shincheonji, which is located in Gwacheon.

Revelation 8

When Jesus opens the seventh and final seal, seven angels begin to sound the seven trumpets. The sealed book, which was in God's hand, has finally been completely opened because the prophecies in this chapter have been fulfilled. This means all seven seals have been broken. It has been almost 2,700 years since God prophesied through Isaiah (Is 29:9-14), but his words have finally been fulfilled. Since the last seal has been opened, the prophecies written in the book have been fulfilled and proclaimed. The trumpet is sounded to proclaim both the prophecies and their physical fulfillment.

Before the seals are opened, there is nothing to proclaim. After the seals are opened, the trumpets are necessary for announcing the events that have occurred. Since angels are spirits, they choose people as trumpets through whom to preach (Is 58:1).

As the first angel sounds his trumpet, hail and fire mixed with blood burns a third of the earth, a third of the trees, and all the green grass. Hail and fire represent the words of wrath. The earth, the trees, and the grass symbolize God's chosen people who have betrayed.

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As the second angel sounds his trumpet, a church like a huge mountain (Is 2:2) all ablaze is thrown into the sea. A third of the sea turns to blood, a third of the creatures in the sea die, and a third of the ships are destroyed. The sea symbolizes the world (Dn 7:2, 17), and blood symbolizes death. The creatures in the sea are the chosen people who have betrayed, and the ships are the churches of the chosen people. The spirits of the chosen people are killed by worldly doctrines (blood) and their churches are destroyed in judgment.

As the third angel sounds his trumpet, a star blazing like a torch falls from the sky onto the rivers and springs. A third of the waters turn bitter and many people die because of them. This great star symbolizes a fallen angel (Is 14:12). He is God's adversary, who left the tabernacle of God to make his own sect. He is a false pastor like Balaam, who taught the gentile king Balak to make the Israelites worship idols. Springs represent pastors welling up with the water of the word. Rivers symbolize evangelists because rivers act as paths that water takes after leaving a spring. False pastors give false doctrines (wormwood) to these pastors and their evangelists, and the spirits of the chosen people die when they drink these false doctrines (Dt 32:32-33)

As the fourth angel sounds his trumpet, a third of the sun, moon, and stars are struck, and a third of the day and the night are without light. In this passage, the sun, moon, and stars represent the pastors, evangelists, and congregation members of the tabernacle of the chosen people. They are attacked and destroyed by the gentile

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authority that enters their tabernacle. They can no longer act as the sun, moon, and stars by shining the light of truth, and their spirits turn dark.

Three trumpets must still be sounded. An eagle flying in midair calls out three loud "woes" to those who live on the earth. This eagle is one of the four living creatures or archangels (Rv 4:7). The people of the earth are the people of the tabernacle of the seven golden lampstands.

This plague of the seven trumpets is a punishment for the church of the seven golden lampstands (Rv 6:15-16). They are punished because they entered the caves and rocks of the gentiles even after receiving Jesus' letter telling them to repent and overcome the Nicolaitans (Rv 2-3). The church of the seven golden lampstands was specially chosen by God, but they failed him. If God's chosen church betrayed him, just imagine the condition of the rest of the world's churches. Today, as Revelation is being fulfilled, people never think to examine their spiritual walk according to the words of promise, and yet they feel safe and secure. Unless all believers think about their own spiritual state according to the words of promise, they cannot avoid destruction. All the believers of the world must be born again just like the Ninevites, who listened to Jonah and repented (Jon 3).

God said, "All you who live in the world, who reside on the earth, you will see a signal flag raised on the mountains; you will hear a trumpet being blown," (Is 18:3). Jesus also said that the angels will sound trumpets when the Son of Man returns (Mt 24:31).

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These trumpets are the seven trumpets mentioned in Rv 8-9 and in Rv 11:15-19. The sound of the trumpet is the testimony about Revelation's fulfillment. When believers hear this trumpet sound, they must understand that the Lord has returned.

Revelation 9

When the fifth angel sounds his trumpet, the star that fell from heaven opens the abyss to release smoke and many locusts. The sun and sky are darkened by the smoke. The locusts torture the betrayers, who lack God's seal, without killing them over the course of five months. The abyss in this chapter represents the churches of the destroyers. The locusts are false pastors that God is using as destroyers. The churches of the destroyers are called the abyss because they contain all the angels of hell. Using their ecclesiastical authority, the destroyers prevent the pastors who betrayed from shining the light of truth anymore. They then torture the spirits of these pastors' congregation members, who have also betrayed.

When the sixth angel sounds his trumpet, a voice from the four horns of the golden altar before God says, "Set free the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates!" These four angels, who have two hundred million mounted troops with them, have been kept to kill a third of mankind. The horses of the mounted troops have heads on their tails. Fire, smoke, and sulfur come out of their mouths to kill people.

These horses are flesh and their riders are evil spirits. The heads of the horses are seven pastors (Rv 17:9-10), and the tails are false

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prophets (i.e., pastors who betrayed) that belong to those seven pastors (Is 9:15; Rv 17:11). The fact that the heads are on the tails means the pastors rule over the false prophets. The fire, smoke, and sulfur that come out of their mouths are the authority and the doctrines of the false pastors. These false pastors spew out lies that kill people's spirits.

The chosen people, because of their betrayal, are thrown from the tabernacle out to the gentiles. Yet, in spite of the many plagues they receive, they still refuse to repent. The betrayers refuse to repent because they are held captive under the authority of death. Their spirits have been darkened and they do not understand what is happening.

The four angels, who were bound at the river Euphrates, are released. The sixth bowl from Rv 16 is poured out onto this same river. This river is figurative and is symbolic of one of the four rivers in the Garden of Eden (Gn 2:14). Since water refers to the word (Dt 32:2; Am 8:11), the river through which the water flows is an evangelist that spreads the word (Jn 7:38). Since the angels who sinned are released from the river Euphrates, it represents hell (Jude 1:6; 2 Pt 2:4). This is the primary location for the activities of the destroyers, and it is the dwelling place of the false pastors (1 Cor 3:9, 16).

The horses in this chapter are pastors who belong to evil spirits. These horses and the four living creatures in Rv 6 belong to different groups. Believers must distinguish this difference to escape spiritual injury. Everyone must meet the promised pastor, who

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comes in the position of Apostle John, who speaks on behalf of Jesus, and who saw and heard all the events of Revelation. In this chapter, Jesus judges the chosen people from the church of the seven golden lampstands that betrayed (Rv 6), and these betrayers enter a gentile church. Even after seeing a third of their spirits killed there, they still refuse to repent.

The promised pastor of Shincheonji testifies that the prophecies in Rv 8 and 9 have been fulfilled. He testifies about their fulfillment with the sound of the trumpet.

Revelation 10

John sees another mighty angel in a cloud come from heaven; he has a rainbow on his head, his face is like the sun, his feet are like a pillar of fire, and he has a small, open book in his hand. His right foot is on the sea, and his left foot is on the land. He shouts like a roaring lion, and the seven thunders speak.

This angel has the same appearance that Jesus had in Rv 1. The book sealed with seven seals, which was opened by Jesus (Rv 6, 8), is given to this angel, and this angel delivers it to Apostle John. Since this angel comes in Jesus' name to deliver something that belongs to Jesus, he is the spirit of truth—the advocate promised in Jn 14-16. John, who saw and heard Revelation, was Jesus' disciple. He wrote the Gospel of John, and 1, 2, and 3 John. When Apostle John saw and heard Revelation roughly 2,000 years ago, he received it in a vision. Today's John—the Apostle John figure—saw and heard in reality when he went up to God's throne in Rv 1 and Rv 4. Jesus

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anointed and commanded him to send the letters to the seven churches in Rv 1. He received the open book from heaven and ate it so that he could testify about its message.

The mighty angel in this chapter appears to John while the sixth angel is sounding his trumpet (Rv 9). The angel tells John to take the book and eat it so that he can teach it again to peoples, nations, languages, and kings. Revelation 1:1 also shows us this same route of passage: God gives the revelation to Jesus, Jesus to the angel, the angel to John, and John to the servants. In Jn 16:13-15, Jesus said that the advocate would teach us from what belongs to Jesus, and that what belongs to Jesus belongs to the Father.

The angel with his feet on the sea and on the land, and who has the little book in his hand, shouts along with the seven thunders. He shows John the judgment of both the destroyers and the betrayers of the church of the seven golden lampstands, which occurred according to the words recorded in God's book. John, after receiving the book, also judges them just as the angel did.

The peoples, nations, languages, and kings who must learn the words from John are the chosen people captured by Babylon, the kingdom of demons (Rv 18:1-4). Let us learn more about the pastors who have saved God's people throughout biblical history by revealing the words they received from God. Many pastors have saved God's chosen people by speaking on behalf of God. Moses spoke God's words on his behalf and delivered the suffering Israelites out of Egypt (Ex 12). At the first coming, Jesus fulfilled Ez 2-3, which said that the Son of Man (Jesus) would receive a book from God

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and eat it before preaching its content to the Israelites. Jesus did not go to other countries speaking foreign languages; he was sent to the lost Israelites (Mt 15:24). He also fulfilled all the prophecies in the Old Testament (Jn 19:30). John is not Moses, nor is he Jesus. John acts according to the book given to him by the angel Jesus sent—he acts according to Jesus' commands.

The believers held captive by Babylon must learn from Apostle John again because they have only learned the teachings of men (Is 29:11-14). Among these people who hear the word of revelation from John, many will come out of Babylon to become God's kingdom and priests and the great multitude in white (Rv 5:9-10, 7:9). This word from the book is opened at the second coming of the Lord. This is the new wine, and it is Jesus' flesh and blood that must be eaten in the new Passover. This new Passover was promised by Jesus in Mt 26:26-29 when he said he would only eat the Passover meal again when God's kingdom comes. Anyone who eats this flesh and blood will be saved and will attain eternal life by coming out of Babylon (Jn 6:51-58). It is the same as the events of Moses' time when the Israelites came out of Egypt and were saved. Also, at the time of the first coming, Jesus' disciples came out from under and were saved from the Pharisees and scribes, who were symbolically described as tombs and prisons.

The angel of this chapter swears to God with a raised hand (Rv 10:5) that when the seventh angel sounds the last trumpet, God's mystery will be fulfilled according to the gospel preached by the prophets (Rv 10:7). This seventh and final trumpet is sounded

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when Rv 11:15 is fulfilled. This is the time of salvation and the time that life begins to reign.

What happens when the seventh trumpet is sounded? The kingdom of the world becomes the kingdom of God (Rv 11:15), the mortal becomes immortal, the perishable becomes imperishable, and death is swallowed up by life (1 Cor 15:51-54). Since the devil has reigned for the past 6,000 years since Adam's fall, all men have died. When the last trumpet is sounded, however, death is destroyed.

To distinguish the time of the sounding of the last trumpet, believers must find Jesus' promised pastor who saw and heard everything in Revelation. No one can know the fulfillment of the prophecies in Revelation without meeting the promised pastor. Jesus' angel is with John to speak through him on Jesus' behalf (Rv 19:10) just as God's angels were with Jesus (Jn 1:51; Mt 4:11).

No one in heaven or on earth is able to open the sealed book until Jesus, himself, opens the seals. He then reveals it to John through the angel, and it is John that finally reveals it to the world. Is there life in the teachings of men or is there life only in the revelation of God? Which one represents God's true will? The teachings of men are utterly lifeless. Life is found in God's word. Anyone who refuses to accept God's word of revelation, and instead believes only in the teachings of men, will become a betrayer who breaks God's covenant.

At the end of the age, believers can know God and Jesus and can attain the kingdom of heaven and eternal life only by accepting

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the revelation and the word of God through the pastor promised in Revelation (Mt 11:27; Jn 17:3).

As seen previously, God's book, which was sealed until today, is given to Jesus. Jesus opens it and gives it to an angel, who then gives it to John (Rv 1:1-3). This is why the words of God's book and their physical fulfillment can only be explained by the one who receives the book.

The pastor who received the opened book from heaven mentioned in Rv 10 is testifying its words and their physical fulfillment at Shincheonji.

Revelation 11

The angel who gave the book to John in Rv 10 gives John a reed like a measuring rod and says, "Get up and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and the ones who worship there. But do not measure the outer courtyard of the temple; leave it out, because it has been given to the Gentiles, and they will trample on the holy city for forty-two months," (Rv 11:1-2).

The angel gave John the open book and the reed like a measuring rod and told him to measure the worshippers in the temple and sanctuary. The reed like a measuring rod is neither a physical reed nor a physical rod. It represents a person that is used to take measurements.

A rod or staff is a tool on which to depend, but it can sometimes be used as a measuring device. The reed-like rod in this chapter represents a spiritual partner given to John, with whom he can

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work. Eve was like a rod to Adam, just as Aaron was like a rod to Moses. Thus, when the angel gives John the reed like a rod, he is giving John a helper. Later, however, John's spiritual helper like a rod betrays when his heart is shaken like a reed in the wind.

The holy city that is given to the gentiles is the church of the seven golden lampstands where the seven angels are in Rv 1-3 and Rv 6. The gentile destroyers invade this tabernacle and trample its people for 42 months (Rv 13; Mt 24:15). On the other hand, John and the other pastor, the reed like a measuring rod, use the words given by the angel (Rv 10) to measure the people who have not united with the destroyers. They do this to find those who will become God's new kingdom and people.

John and his assistant, the reed like a measuring rod, are God's two witnesses who prophesy for 1,260 days. The angel describes these two witnesses as the two olive trees and two lampstands standing before the Lord (Rv 11:3-4; Zec 4:11-14) because they enlighten darkened spirits with the light of the words of prophecy just as the olive oil in the lampstands lit the lamps of the tabernacle (2 Pt 1:19).

When the two witnesses finish testifying, they are killed by the beast from the abyss. They are only dead for three and a half days, however, before they receive the breath of life and are carried up to heaven in the clouds. This means their spirits are led by the holy spirit to God's dwelling place. This dwelling place of God is the temple seen in Rv 14 and 15.

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There is one thing we need to clarify. The most holy one (the anointed one) in Dn 9 is Jesus. The Son of Man who ate the book in Ez 2-3 is also Jesus at the first coming. The two people who resurrect in this chapter are not Jesus. They are the two witnesses standing before the Lord. Daniel 9:24-27, mentions 69 weeks (7 weeks and 62 weeks) that pass from the issuing of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem until the Messiah, the most holy one, is anointed. Later, after the 62 weeks have passed, the anointed one will cease to exist and the enemy who destroys the sanctuary will prohibit the giving of gifts halfway through the 70th week. This was fulfilled by Jesus at the first coming. The temple was Jesus' body. The rebuilding of the temple was Jesus' death and resurrection. Jesus was buried in a new grave and later rose again.

What are the differences between Dn 9 and Rv 11? In Dn 9, there was a command to rebuild the temple, but in Rv 11, there is a command to measure the temple and the worshippers in it. In Dn 9, gift giving was prohibited, but in Rv 11, gifts are sent and received. In the first coming Jesus was buried, but in Rv 11, the two witnesses are refused burial. The two witnesses in Rv 11 are not the Lord, because they are standing before the Lord. Thus, the 70 weeks in Dn 9 need not be further interpreted because the prophecy in Rv 11 is different from the prophecy in Dn 9. In addition, Revelation says not to add or subtract anything from the written words.

When the two witnesses resurrect, the 42 months given to the gentiles come to an end and the seventh angel begins to sound the seventh trumpet. When the seventh trumpet is sounded, the

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kingdom of the world becomes the kingdom of God, and death is swallowed up by life in victory.

After the resurrection of the two witnesses, God's temple in heaven, which contains the ark of the covenant, opens. There are flashes of lightning, roaring, crashes of thunder, and an earthquake. Please refer to the book *The Secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven: The Physical Fulfillment of Revelation* for a more detailed explanation of this passage.

All believers should find the two witnesses who saw and heard the events of Revelation. How can we know and believe in the prophecies God has given us and their physical fulfillment if no one testifies about them?

Let us learn about the mystery of God that is accomplished at the sound of the seventh trumpet. John said the mystery of God is fulfilled when the seventh trumpet is sounded, just as the gospel was preached to the prophets (Rv 10:7). According to Apostle Paul's letter, the mystery is eternal life (1 Cor 15:51-54).

✦ [51]Listen, I will tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed – [52]in a moment, in the blinking of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. [53]For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. [54]Now when this perishable puts on the imperishable, and this mortal puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will happen, "Death has been swallowed up in victory." (1 Cor 15:51-54)

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When the last trumpet is sounded, the spirits of believers who are asleep in the Lord will live again in spiritual form. Their dead physical bodies do not come to life again because no one can inherit God's kingdom through physical flesh and blood alone. The perishable cannot inherit the imperishable. On the other hand, believers who are alive in their own physical bodies can put on the imperishable and incorruptible because they have been changed. This is when the spirits and flesh that belong to God unite. The heavenly souls of the dead resurrect and are transformed by uniting with the bodies of the living. The living receive these heavenly souls and are transformed to live forever with Christ. This is how the gospel is fulfilled. The gospel says that death is swallowed up by life. It says that those who believe God and Jesus will live even if they are dead and that those who believe while living will never die (Is 25:6-8; Rv 21:1-4; Jn 11:25-27).

- I, the author of this book, received the revelation according to Rv 1 in the fall of 1977. After that I went to the first tabernacle in Gwacheon (i.e., the Tabernacle Temple). At that time, Satan and his Nicolaitans had already entered the tabernacle. I sent the letters to the seven angels of the first tabernacle in 1979, and I received the small book from the angel in early 1980. I went into prison for testifying the word in the fall of 1980, but I was released in 1981. In the winter of 1981, I went to a mountain to write *The Creation of Heaven and Earth* for the first time. Through the fault of my transcriptionist, and against my will, the book was not published at that time. There was a horrible

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battle from the end of 1982 through 1983. In 1984, however, Shincheonji Church of Jesus—Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony—was established and proclaimed.

The events of Rv 11 have been fulfilled according to what is written, and since then the last trumpet of salvation has continued to sound.

Revelation 12

It must be made clear that the events of Rv 12 occur in the same place as the events of Rv 13, but they occur after the events of Rv 13. In addition, the sun, moon, and stars the woman is wearing represent Spiritual Israel, not Physical Israel.

In this chapter, John sees a great sign in heaven; he sees a woman clothed with the sun who has the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head (hereafter referred to as the woman clothed with the sun, moon, and stars). She cries out while trying to give birth to a child. The heaven of Rv 12 is the same as the heaven in Rv 1 (i.e., the church of the seven stars and the seven golden lampstands), and it is the same as the tabernacle of heaven in Rv 13:6. The sun, moon and stars are symbolic of God's chosen people (Gn 37:9-10). The tabernacle where the chosen people dwell is heaven. Therefore, the fact that the woman is clothed with the sun, moon, and stars indicates she is the pastor of the tabernacle of the chosen people. The woman's child, which is spiritually born, is a male child that will rule all nations with an iron scepter.

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Then, John sees another sign in heaven. There is a red dragon with seven heads and ten horns. This dragon knocks a third of the stars in heaven down to the earth with his tail and tries to swallow the male child who is about to be born. This dragon is Satan and the seven heads and ten horns that belong to the dragon are the invaders and destroyers of the tabernacle in Rv 13. They defeat the congregation members of the tabernacle and mark people's foreheads with their name.

As soon as the child is born, he is taken up to God's throne and the woman flees to the desert for 1,260 days. The stars the dragon throws down to the earth are the congregation members of the tabernacle of heaven from Rv 13. Spiritually speaking, the desert represents a place where God does not dwell. This is also the place to which John the Baptist fled.

After the woman flees, there is war in heaven between Michael and his angels and the dragon and his angels. The angels of Michael belong to God and angels of the dragon are the evil ones. When these two groups battle in the spiritual world, the male child and his brothers also fight against the destroyers in the physical world. Ultimately, both Michael's angels and the male child with his brothers overcome, and the dragon and his destroyers are defeated and thrown out of heaven.

The weapons the child and his brothers use are the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony. The actions of the dragon and the destroyers testify and give evidence for their identities. As prophesied, the child and his brothers reveal the identities of the

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dragon and destroyers for their acts of destruction. They do this by testifying that the destroyers belong to the organization of the dragon. The fact that the dragon invades the tabernacle of heaven proves that he is Satan and the beast, which represents the destroyers. When this testimony is announced, the dragon is thrown out because he can no longer remain in the tabernacle.

After the dragon is thrown out of the tabernacle of heaven, the salvation, the power, the kingdom of God, and the ruling authority of Christ are accomplished. According to Rv 7 and 14, the kingdom of God is fulfilled through the twelve tribes of New Spiritual Israel.

The dragon that is thrown out is the same evil spirit that worked through the serpent at the time of Adam (Gn 3:1). God prophesied that the descendants of the woman and the descendants of the serpent would become enemies, and that the descendants of the woman would strike the head of the serpent (Gn 3:15). That prophecy was partially fulfilled at the first coming of Jesus (Mt 23) and is completely fulfilled in Rv 12 when the serpent is finally defeated.

The defeated dragon goes down to the sea and to the earth to persecute the woman who had given birth to the male child. The dragon also stands on the seashore to fight against the remnants who have held to God's commands. In the end, however, the dragon is captured by an angel and imprisoned in the abyss for 1,000 years (Rv 20:1-3).

Believers must think carefully about Rv 12:6, 12, and 13-14. When and for how long did the woman flee to the desert? What are the earth and the sea to which the dragon is cast down? Only the

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witness of the fulfillment knows the answers to these questions. The earth and the sea are the same as the earth and sea in Rv 10, 13, and 16. The earth represents the betrayers who belonged to the holy spirit until they betrayed, fell from heaven, and returned to being mere flesh. The sea represents the group of the dragon, which will be judged (Rv 17:1-2, 15). The earth and sea are the congregation members that belong to the dragon. Revelation 12:6 and 14 refer to the same time period and the same woman. This woman is cared for in the desert for 1,260 days (a time, two times, and half a time). After the woman gives birth to the son, she flees to the desert to escape the dragon. She later returns when the serpent (dragon) is thrown out of heaven. When the dragon realizes he has been thrown down to the earth, he persecutes the woman. As a result, the woman escapes again to the desert, the place prepared for her and the place where she used to be. This is the testimony of the witness who saw these events at the place they occurred.

The testimony regarding the events in this single chapter of Revelation could easily fill a book by itself. This, however, is only a summary. The people mentioned in Rv 12:11 who fight against the dragon and overcome (i.e., the male child born to the woman and his brothers) are the same people who are gathered at the sea of glass in Rv 15:2. How can the dragon invade heaven and fight against its congregation members again after he is defeated? If the beast of Rv 13 is victorious after the events in Rv 12 are fulfilled, then the kingdom of God, his salvation, and those who overcome in Rv 12 cannot exist. In fact, the event where the beast overcomes

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in Rv 13 does not happen after the beast is defeated in Rv 12. The events in Rv 13 occur prior to the events of Rv 12.

According to Jesus' promise in Rv 2:26-27, the child in Rv 12 who fights and overcomes the Nicolaitans (Satan's organization) receives the iron scepter with which to rule all nations. This child is the pastor Jesus promised.

The tabernacle where the one who overcomes is born is the place where the mounted troops of God and Satan are gathered. Jesus was born in a physical stable; the male child who will rule all nations (the one who overcomes) appears in a spiritual stable, which represents a church. The dragon and his group of destroyers try to kill this child at the time of Revelation's fulfillment just like the Jewish leaders tried to kill the baby Jesus at the time of his first coming.

Since the fulfillment of God's kingdom and salvation comes after the male child who will rule all nations overcomes in Rv 12, all believers must know the time and the place these events occur. Shincheonji is proclaiming the details regarding this time and place. Jesus said, "Above all pursue his kingdom and righteousness," (Mt 6:33). He also said, "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened for you," (Mt 7:7). Do today's believers seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness as promised in Rv 12? If you have not yet found it, why would you not still be seeking? Shincheonji, which has overcome, is testifying the truth about the place and people of Revelation's fulfillment.

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In order to find the kingdom of God, which has been fulfilled according to the prophecies of Rv 12, believers must find the man who fought and overcame the organization of the dragon. When the red dragon with seven heads and ten horns entered the tabernacle of heaven, the woman clothed with the sun, moon, and stars (Rv 12:1) gave birth to this man. Therefore, to find the male child, believers must find the tabernacle of heaven where he was born.

The Old Testament only testifies about Jesus (Jn 5:39). Thus, it is not an exaggeration to say that the New Testament only testifies about this one male child. God's revelation, grace, and word are delivered to and explained by the one male child who overcomes. The spiritual kingdom of heaven descends on the twelve tribes, which are led by the one who overcomes. No one who believes in Rv 2 and 3 can deny this.

Revelation 12 begins after the beast enters the tabernacle of heaven, and, although it includes the 42 month period of destruction given to the beast, Rv 12 also concerns events beyond those 42 months. I have mentioned it before, but I will mention it again. Chronologically, the events of Rv 12 occur after the events of Rv 13.

According to Dt 28, those who are defeated in battle flee seven ways. The one who overcomes, however, becomes Israel and creates the twelve tribes. Jesus promised, in Rv 2-3, to give the one who overcomes, who will rule all nations, the hidden manna that gives eternal life. Jesus also promised that the holy city of God's kingdom would descend and unite with the one who overcomes.

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Therefore, in order to find the way to God's kingdom and eternal life, people must belong to the one who overcomes.

The one who overcomes is testifying about the prophecies of Rv 12 and their physical fulfillment.

Revelation 13

John sees a beast with seven heads and ten horns coming out of the sea. The beast has the appearance of a leopard, a bear, and a lion. It receives power and a throne from the dragon. The sea in this chapter refers to the world. The beast is symbolic of the destroyers, and the dragon is Satan. The seven heads of the beast are Satan's seven leaders—seven pastors. The ten horns are ten authority figures that belong to the beast. They have the same spirits working in them that worked through the scribes and Pharisees, who destroyed the spirits of the chosen people in Jerusalem at the first coming (Mt 23:33). These destroyers are the organization of Satan, the Nicolaitans (Rv 2:9, 15). They are also the pastors of Babylon, which is referred to as the kingdom of demons (Rv 17:1-5).

The beast that receives great power from the dragon invades the tabernacle of God's chosen people, defeats them, and rules over the holy tabernacle for 42 months (Rv 11:2). Paul prophesied about the man of destruction taking his seat in God's temple, claiming himself to be God (2 Thes 2:1-4). This is the same as when the scribes and Pharisees were sitting on Moses' seat (Mt 23:2).

When this happens, all those whose names are not written in the book of life worship the beast. In addition, another beast comes

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up from the earth and makes an idol on behalf of the first beast, killing anyone who refuses to worship the idol. The second beast marks people's foreheads and right hands with the number 666, which represents his name.

The tabernacle of heaven in this chapter refers to the church of the seven golden lampstands. God's chosen people must be set apart from the world just like the sun, moon, and stars are set apart in the heavens (Gn 37:9-10). This is why the tabernacle of the chosen people is heaven. The church of the seven golden lampstands is the tabernacle of the chosen people where Jesus dwells (Rv 1:9-20).

Anyone who is not part of the chosen people is considered a gentile, and these gentiles are figuratively referred to both as many waters and as the sea (Rv 17:1, 15). This chapter concerns the event of a false pastor (a beast) belonging to the world (the many waters or the sea) entering the church of the seven golden lampstands (the tabernacle of heaven) to destroy its chosen people using his ecclesiastical authority.

The destroyers are called beasts because they lack knowledge of God's word just like animals (Prv 30:2-3; Is 56:9-11). They take the appearance of a lion, a bear, and a leopard because these are animals that devour God's sheep-like chosen people.

The beast from the earth unites with the beast from the sea to destroy the Tabernacle Temple. These two beasts, however, belong to different groups. The beast from the sea enters the Tabernacle Temple from the world (the sea), but the beast from the earth already belongs to the Tabernacle Temple (the earth). From a

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spiritual point of view, the beast from the earth is a person like Solomon, who disobeyed God's will and worshiped gentile gods. He is a false prophet like Balaam (Nm 23-24), who taught King Balak of Moab how to entrap the Israelites. Solomon annually collected 666 talents of gold from the gentiles (1 Kgs 10:14). This 666 from the Old Testament is used figuratively to describe the number of the name of the beast from the earth. It is a figurative measurement of the lies of Satan.

What, then, happens to those who are marked with the name of the beast? They are punished in the lake of fire and sulfur forever. Salvation, however, comes only to those who flee to the mountain when they see the destroyers standing in the holy tabernacle (Mt 24:1-16; Rv 3:4, 17:14). This mountain is Mt. Zion, which is promised in Rv 14:1. It refers to Shincheonji—New Spiritual Israel.

The events in this chapter occur in a single place called the tabernacle of heaven. They do not take place all over the world. God sets a trap in the tabernacle of heaven to catch Satan. When Satan gives his authority and power to the destroyers and the destroyers act according to the prophecies in this chapter, the true identities of Satan and his destroyers, which are mentioned in the Bible, are revealed to the world. At that time, all the nations that were once deceived by Satan will realize who Satan and his destroyers are and will no longer be deceived. People will follow Jesus and his promised pastor, who can testify about these events, after they fight against and overcome the dragon and his beasts.

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Anyone who truly believes that the prophecies of the Bible will be fulfilled should know the tabernacle of Rv 13, the beast that destroys it, and the promised pastor who fights and overcomes the beast. Believers should remember that all nations are deceived at some point. This is why people must recognize to which of these three groups they belong.

Today, the prophecies recorded in Rv 13 have already been physically fulfilled.

Revelation 14

✦ [1]Then I looked, and here was the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with him were one hundred and forty-four thousand, who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. [2]I also heard a sound coming out of heaven like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder. Now the sound I heard was like that made by harpists playing their harps, [3]and they were singing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one was able to learn the song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been redeemed from the earth. [4]These are the ones who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These were redeemed from humanity as firstfruits to God and to the Lamb, [5]and no lie was found on their lips; they are blameless. (Rv 14:1-5)

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In this chapter, 144,000 people, who are called the firstfruits, sing a new song at Mt. Zion, and the eternal gospel is preached by the angels. The people who have received the mark of the beast and worshiped the beast suffer from fire and sulfur. People like good grain are harvested by angels and people like wild grapes are judged.

Those who worshiped the beast and who received his mark in Rv 13 are the people at the tabernacle who failed to flee to Mt. Zion even after seeing the destroyers standing in the holy place (Mt 24:15-16). No one who remains in the tabernacle believes in the prophecies of Revelation and their fulfillment.

Revelation 6 describes the judgment of the chosen people who betrayed, while Rv 7 prophesies about the creation of the twelve tribes of the new chosen people. Just as Rv 6-7 explain betrayal and salvation, Rv 13 describes those who are marked with the name of the beast and Rv 14 introduces those who are sealed with the name of God and Jesus.

According to the logical process of betrayal, destruction and salvation, 144,000 people are sealed with God's name as they gather at Mt. Zion. This happens only after the people of the tabernacle of heaven have betrayed and have been destroyed by the beast, the gentiles.

Where is this Mt. Zion? When does it appear? What is it referring to? Mount Zion is not a mountain, nor is it a field. It is a man. Zion represents the chosen people. God was referring to the chosen people of Israel when he said, "They will call you, 'The City of

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the LORD, Zion of the Holy One of Israel,'" (Is 60:14), and "Escape, Zion, you who live among the Babylonians!" (Zec 2:7).

Zion in Rv 14 represents the people who come out of the figurative nation of Babylon (Rv 18) at the time of the fulfillment of Revelation. Zion also represents the place these people are gathered. At the time of the first coming, Physical Israel lost its status as the chosen people (Jn 1:11-13), and it was the Christians, as Spiritual Israel, who became God's new chosen people in the time of the New Testament.

Those who are sealed with the name of God and Jesus

> [31]The one who comes from above is superior to all. The one who is from the earth belongs to the earth and speaks about earthly things. The one who comes from heaven is superior to all. [32]He testifies about what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony. [33]The one who has accepted his testimony has confirmed clearly that God is truthful. (Jn 3:31-33)

Apostle John heard all the events in Revelation from Jesus and the angels when he went to the spiritual heaven. A seal is a symbol of possession or acknowledgment. The one who has accepted the things of heaven has confirmed or acknowledged clearly that God is truthful (Jn 3:33). When a believer acknowledges that God is truthful, God puts his seal on that person. When a seal is used, its content is stamped on a piece of paper. When God's seal is stamped, God's word is engraved on a heart. Anyone who is sealed by God knows that he or she is sealed because the word

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is engraved on his or her heart. They are the people of the new covenant (Heb 8:10-13).

The firstfruits—the 144,000 people

Approximately 2,600 years ago, God prophesied that he would plant the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the offspring of men and the offspring of beasts (Jer 31:27, KJV). Roughly 600 years later, Jesus sowed the seed to fulfill that prophecy (Mt 13:24-25). The seed (good seed) is God's word (Lk 8:11). The seed that was sown has been growing for 2,000 years into a large tree that is ready to bear fruit. Finally, today, the time of harvest has come (Mt 13:30; Rv 14:14-16). These fruit are the sons of God's kingdom born of the good seed (Mt 13:37-38); they are believers born of the word of truth (Jas 1:18). These people belong to the twelve tribes, which are the twelve branches of the tree of life (Rv 22:1-2).

- [37]He answered, "The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. [38]The field is the world and the good seed are the people of the kingdom. The weeds are the people of the evil one, (Mt 13:37-38).

- Now the parable means this: The seed is the word of God. (Lk 8:11)

- By his sovereign plan he gave us birth through the message of truth, that we would be a kind of firstfruits of all he created. (Jas 1:18)

- [1]Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life – water as clear as crystal – pouring out from the throne of God and of the Lamb, [2]flowing down the middle of the city's main street. On each

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> side of the river is the tree of life producing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month of the year. Its leaves are for the healing of the nations. (Rv 22:1-2)

The new song that can only be learned at Mt. Zion

The new song is the new word that testifies the physical fulfillment of the prophecies that were sealed with seven seals. At the first coming, Jesus fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament and testified that fulfillment. This testimony was a new song for the people of that time. At the end of the age, the prophecies of the New Testament are fulfilled and their fulfillment is proclaimed. This testimony is the new song. It is only taught at Mt. Zion because the one person who witnessed the fulfillment of the New Testament prophecies (including Revelation) is at Mt. Zion. This witness is the pastor who receives and eats the book opened by Jesus (Rv 10). Again, the word of testimony that proclaims the New Testament prophecies and their physical fulfillment comes only from Mt. Zion.

Jesus said he would not drink from the fruit of the vine until he drinks it anew in God's kingdom (Lk 22:14-20; Mt 26:26-29). Singing the new song in Rv 14 is the same as drinking the new wine in God's kingdom, which is the same as eating the blood and flesh of Jesus.

At the end of the Christian world, the sun and moon go dark and the stars fall. This is when the home for demons (Rv 18:2), the kingdom of Babylon, rules all nations (Rv 18:23). At that time, God sends the promised pastor of Revelation, the one who overcomes, to the believers held captive in Babylon. He leads them out by giving

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them Jesus' flesh and blood. This is today's Passover. Believers who have come out of Babylon have established the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony and commemorate this with today's spiritual Feast of Tabernacles. They also commemorate the harvesting of grain-like believers with today's spiritual Feast of Ingathering. The words testifying that these events have been fulfilled are the new song of Mt. Zion.

What, then, does it mean to say that the firstfruits, the 144,000, have not defiled themselves with women and have kept themselves pure? The woman they have avoided is the prostitute (Rv 17) riding on the beast with seven heads and ten horns. The kings of the earth have committed adultery with her, but the firstfruits, the 144,000, are led by Jesus and act according to his will. Therefore, no one who is a true believer will unite with the prostitute.

The grapes that will be judged

Revelation 14:14-16 are about harvesting the grain-like believers, but Rv 14:17-20 are about the judgment the wild grapes receive outside the city (Jn 5:24-29). The wild grapes are the betrayers and destroyers who appear in Rv 13 and 16. Anyone who receives the beast's mark and worships the beast will suffer eternally in fire and sulfur.

The eternal gospel

What is the eternal gospel, which will be proclaimed to every nation, tribe, language, and people? Just as Jesus' fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies is proclaimed forever, the way in

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which the New Testament prophecies (including Revelation) are fulfilled becomes the new song that is proclaimed as the eternal gospel. We also must learn the new song at Mt. Zion and proclaim the eternal gospel.

The events prophesied in Rv 14 are being fulfilled in Shincheonji, which is located in Gwacheon, Gyeonggi province, Republic of Korea.

Revelation 15

John sees another great and marvelous sign in heaven: seven angels having seven plagues. We know that these are the last plagues because Rv 15:1 says that with them God's wrath is completed.

What is the heaven in Rv 15? The heaven where the angels receive the bowls of wrath is the new heaven, the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony mentioned in Rv 15:5. The place where the bowls are poured out is the first heaven, the Tabernacle Temple of Rv 13 and 16. The plagues of the seven seals and the six trumpets judge the chosen people. The seven bowls are called "another sign" because they simultaneously judge both the destroyers—the beast that entered the tabernacle (heaven) in Rv 13—and the betrayers that received the mark of the beast.

Those who have escaped and been victorious over the beast, his image, and the number of his name stand on the sea of glass. They hold harps given to them by God and they sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb. Those who overcome in Rv 15 are the same as the male child (who rules all nations) and his brothers from

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Rv 12. They fight and overcome the dragon with seven heads and ten horns that entered the tabernacle from the sea. They are victorious through the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony. These overcomers witnessed firsthand the entry of the beast's group into the tabernacle of heaven. Then, they fought against the group of the beast and defeated it. Can these people say that they do not know the group of the beast? In reality, they know it very well. This is why the truth about the events of Revelation can only be discovered by asking the one who witnessed the people who appeared at the place the events of Revelation were fulfilled—the one who has fought and overcome the beast.

Those who overcome gather at the sea of glass (Rv 4:6) in front of God's throne, see the physical fulfillment of Revelation, and then testify about it. This passage says that those who have overcome hold the harps of God and sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb. God's harp is the Bible. The song of Moses refers to the words of the Old Testament, while the song of the Lamb refers to the words of the New Testament. Singing these songs means that these people are explaining the words of the Bible. When considering this, the place where those who overcome have gathered is where the Old and New Testaments have been mastered, and where their explanation is being taught.

The Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony opens at the sea of glass, which is where those who have overcome are gathered (Rv 15:5). This is where those who have overcome testify about the Old and New Testaments and about the physical fulfillment of

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Revelation. It is God's will for all nations to stream to this place to worship God. Believers who want to act on their faith must find this place and worship. There are many churches in the world, but there are no other true temples. The only temple that is promised in the New Testament is the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony where the one who overcomes can be found.

Since the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony is the gathering place for those who have fought against and overcome the beast, it must appear after the events of Rv 13 where the beast enters the Tabernacle Temple (heaven) to carry out its work. Those who overcome the beast and gather at the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony become bowls that store God's wrath. The angel takes these bowls and pours out their plagues on the beast and on those who worship the beast by receiving his mark (Rv 16).

The tabernacle of Rv 13 is the first heaven that passes away because it is destroyed by the beast. Afterward, the second tabernacle, which is created around those who overcome, becomes the new heaven. The chosen people of the first heaven in Rv 13 worshiped the dragon and the beast, but the congregation members of the new heaven in Rv 15 worship God.

People who believe in God will act according to his words as recorded in the Bible. They will find the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony that is promised in the Bible. At that time, those who truly believe and those who do not will be divided.

Those who overcome and gather at the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony store God's wrath in their hearts. The angels come

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to the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony and use those who overcome as bowls of God's wrath. The angels pour out the bowls of God's wrath on the beast and on those who worshiped the beast after receiving its mark.

The three most important things in Revelation are: (1) the one who overcomes—the promised pastor; (2) the promised seminary that teaches the new song in front of God's throne; and (3) the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony where all nations must go and worship. All believers in the New Testament era must attain salvation by finding these three things.

The events prophesied in Rv 15 have been physically fulfilled in Gwacheon, Gyeonggi province, Republic of Korea.

Revelation 16

John hears a loud voice from the temple telling the seven angels to go and pour out the seven bowls of God's wrath. This temple refers to the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony mentioned in Rv 15. The seven angels are angels that come out of the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony. The seven bowls of wrath are individuals, among those who have overcome, that received the word of wrath in Rv 15. The bowls of wrath are poured out on the beast and on those who received the mark of the beast—the betrayers and destroyers. God's wrath is poured out from the bowls. God is angry because of the acts of betrayal and destruction.

The prophecies of Rv 16 are fulfilled after the events of Rv 13, 12, and 15. Spiritually, this is similar to the time God plagued

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Egypt when the Israelites made their exodus. The plagues of Rv 16 are similar to the plagues of Rv 8 and 9, but the object of God's wrath has changed.

The bowls of wrath in Rv 16 are poured out on the earth, sea, rivers, springs, sun, the beast's throne, the great river Euphrates, and into the air.

When the first angel pours out his bowl on the land, ugly and painful sores appear on those who received the mark of the beast and worshiped its idol (Rv 13). The land refers to the congregation members of the Tabernacle Temple of the seven golden lampstands, the location of the events of Rv 13. When God's word, which includes his wrath, is poured onto them, the flaws of the chosen people that left God and received the beast's (the serpent's) venom are revealed. In other words, this judgment reveals the mistakes of the chosen people that betrayed God. This is similar to Rv 13:9-10 and La 1:21-22, where God repays people according to what they have done.

When the second angel pours out his bowl on the sea, the seawater turns to blood and all the living creatures in the sea die. The fish represent believers (Hb 1:14) and the sea where the fish live represents the world (Dn 7:2-3, 17). The fact that the seawater turns to blood when God's wrath is poured onto it means that God's word judges the teachings of the world and reveals those teachings to be lifeless lies. This means that believers (i.e., the fish and other living creatures) who were listening to the sermons of the destroyers (beasts) are no longer able to listen to their false

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teachings because they have been revealed to be lies. Just as the destroyers killed the spirits of the chosen people who betrayed with seawater that turned into blood at the sound of the second trumpet in Rv 8, the destroyers are repaid here with a similar plague. This plague is also similar to the time when Moses, by God's power, turned the waters of Egypt into blood, making them undrinkable.

When the third angel pours the bowl on the rivers and springs of water, they turn to blood. Those who shed the blood of God's people and his prophets must drink this blood. The rivers and springs of water are the evangelists and false pastors that belong to the beast. When the water turns to blood it means the true nature of their teachings is revealed; the teachings of the beast are revealed to be lies with no life in them. When those who shed the blood of God's people and his prophets are forced to drink the water turned to blood it means Satan and the beast, the destroyers, must hear directly that their teachings are false. When the third trumpet was sounded in Rv 8, a star fell from heaven and killed people by making them drink bitter water. In vengeance, God makes the group of the destroyers drink the blood of the beast.

When the fourth angel pours his bowl on the sun, the sun is given power to scorch people with fire. This sun receives his throne and authority from the dragon because he is the head of the beast (i.e., a group of false pastors) that speaks on behalf of the dragon. Instead of repenting after hearing the words of wrath, he makes the congregation members of the tabernacle that betrayed suffer even more. This is similar to the time of Moses when Pharaoh's heart was

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so hardened by the plagues that he further tortured the Israelites. God sends this plague to repay the destroyers for striking the sun (Rv 8)—the pastor of the tabernacle of the chosen people—and for not allowing his sun to shine the light of truth. God also pours out his wrath on the destroyers because, as described in Rv 9, they made his people suffer for five months.

When the fifth angel pours out his bowl onto the throne of the beast, the beast's kingdom becomes dark and men curse God because of their pain. The darkening of the beast's kingdom means that the destroyers can no longer insist their teachings are truth (light) because God's word of wrath has judged them and has revealed them to be lies. The kingdom of the destroyers is darkened because the destroyers were the ones that demolished God's tabernacle and made it dark. Revelation 16:11 says the congregation members of the first tabernacle do not repent, even though they are troubled because they know that they have united with the destroyers (i.e., worshiped the beast by receiving its mark). Revelation 14:10 says that these people will be tormented with burning sulfur forever. This plague is the wrath poured out on the destroyers because they refused to allow the chosen people—represented by the sun, moon, and stars—to shine the light of truth.

When the sixth angel pours out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, its water dries up to prepare the way for the kings from the east. What is this river Euphrates?

According to Rv 9, the river Euphrates is the place where the four angels who were bound are released. These angels are evil spirits

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who have been prepared to kill a third of mankind by working through false pastors. The river Euphrates of Rv 16 represents the destroyers through whom the evil spirits work. In other words, the river Euphrates represents the beast with seven heads and ten horns, and it represents the headquarters for all of their activities.

The drying up of the river Euphrates means that the teachings of the destroyers, likened unto river water, no longer come from the destroyers' hearts and mouths. As soon as the river Euphrates dries up (i.e., when the teachings of the destroyers have disappeared), the word of the testimony becomes the path that leads to the place of salvation—the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony. Just as God dried the waters of the Red Sea to create a path for the Israelites he led out of Egypt, the word of the testimony becomes the path for God's people to take as they escape the den of the destroyers. Thus, the wrath stored inside the sixth bowl is the wrath against the angels who sinned and who were released from the river Euphrates to kill a third of mankind.

Then, three evil spirits that looked like frogs come from the mouth of the dragon, the mouth of the beast, and the mouth of the false prophet. These evil spirits were in the false pastors and are now coming out. Just as the holy spirit dwells within the hearts of true believers (Jn 14:16-20; 1 Cor 3:16), evil spirits enter people who receive the laying on of hands from or believe in the words of a false pastor. Therefore, above all else, believers must understand to whom a pastor belongs by distinguishing whether the words coming out of his mouth are true or false.

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Revelation 16:14 says that these spirits of demons come out from the mouth of the false prophet, go out to the kings (pastors) of the whole world, and gather them to Armageddon for the battle on the great day of God Almighty.

Armageddon is a spiritual battlefield where the pastors of Babylon gather to attack those who have overcome them. This is the place where the angels and their bowls of wrath appear. It is the place where those who have overcome, as described in Rv 14 and 15 have gathered. It is the location of the sea of glass in front of God's throne—the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony. Satan will gather the kings of the earth to surround this place. Again, all the demons of this world will gather for battle at the place of God and those who have overcome. In addition, Satan will deceive Gog and Magog after emerging from his prison at the end of the millennium (Rv 20:7-10). They will surround the city of God's beloved people, but fire will come down from heaven and will devour God's enemies. This should make it clear that regardless of whether it is Moses' time, Jesus' first coming, Jesus' second coming, or a thousand years later, Satan gathers wherever God's work is being carried out.

Believers should not become believers without discernment, thinking they will receive unconditional salvation simply by believing in Jesus. Believers should know that God's work of salvation must take place through this kind of battle in Rv 16, because it is only in being victorious that God's kingdom and salvation are

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possible. After the battle, Babylon, the kingdom of demons, is defeated (Rv 18) and Satan is locked up in the abyss (Rv 20).

When the seventh angel pours his bowl into the air, the great city splits into three parts and hailstones each weighing about one talent fall upon men. The air refers to the rumors that reveal the acts of the betrayers and the destroyers to all churches. As a result, the great city of Babylon, the home of the destroyers, collapses (Rv 18:2). When the destroyers receive God's judgment, the congregation members of the tabernacle that belongs to them are divided into three groups. Some people remain in the Tabernacle Temple, where they originally were. Another group escapes to the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony, and the third group stays with Babylon. This is how people are divided into three groups.

As mentioned, God judges his people that betrayed him and their destroyers (Rv 13:9-10) according to their deeds.

The events prophesied in Rv 16 have already been physically fulfilled.

Revelation 17

✥ [1]Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke to me. "Come," he said, "I will show you the condemnation and punishment of the great prostitute who sits on many waters, [2]with whom the kings of the earth committed sexual immorality and the earth's inhabitants got drunk with the wine of her immorality." [3]So he carried me away in the Spirit to a wilderness, and there I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was full of blasphemous names

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> and had seven heads and ten horns. [4]Now the woman was dressed in purple and scarlet clothing, and adorned with gold, precious stones, and pearls. She held in her hand a golden cup filled with detestable things and unclean things from her sexual immorality. [5]On her forehead was written a name, a mystery: "Babylon the Great, the Mother of prostitutes and of the detestable things of the earth." (Rv 17:1-5).

The angel that speaks to John in Rv 17 is one of the seven angels that poured out the seven bowls (Rv 15, 16). The prostitute, who will receive judgment, is the head of the false pastors. The beast with seven heads and ten horns that this woman rides is the group of the dragon that entered the heaven (tabernacle) of Rv 12 and 13 to destroy it and its congregation members. A false pastor is called a prostitute because although she claims to believe in God, who is the groom (Hos 2:19), she has received the seed of the devil and given birth to his spiritual children. The seed of the devil represents his teachings and his spiritual children are church congregation members. This becomes more clear when considering the fact that Apostle Paul compared himself to a woman in the pains of childbirth (Gal 4:19) and to a mother offering milk to her spiritual children (1 Cor 3:2).

The kings of the earth mentioned in Rv 17:1-5 are the pastors of the world (1 Pt 2:9; Rv 17:9-10). The fact that they have committed adultery with the prostitute means they follow and have had sexual relations with the devil. The inhabitants of the earth are church members, and the wine of adultery that has made them drunk represents the teachings that the prostitute and the kings of

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the earth have received from the devil. Since Jesus is referred to as the true vine (Jn 15:1), the false pastors are wild vines. Since Jesus' words are the true wine, the words of the false pastors that committed adultery with the devil are the wine of the wild vine. This wild wine is also equated with the venom of serpents (Dt 32:32-33).

The angel who says the prostitute will be judged takes John in the spirit to a desert. There John sees a prostitute riding on the beast with seven heads and ten horns that appears in Rv 13. The prostitute is dressed in purple and scarlet, glittering with gold, precious stones, and pearls.

The many waters the prostitute is sitting on represent the beast with seven heads and ten horns, but they also represent the peoples, multitudes, nations, and languages that belong to them. The clothes and precious stones the prostitute has used to adorn herself represent the knowledge and teachings with which she covers herself while pretending they belong to God. The golden cup in her hand represents Bibles filled with commentaries. This figuratively refers back to an Old Testament event when the king of Babylon, who destroyed Israel, drank Babylonian wine from the golden cup he stole from the temple in Jerusalem (Dn 5:1-4).

According to Rv 17:5, a mysterious name is recorded on the forehead of the prostitute: "Babylon the Great, the Mother of prostitutes and of the detestable things of the earth." The name of the prostitute is a mystery because no one knows her real identity. She is the mother of all prostitutes and the abominations of the earth because she gives birth to spiritual children (i.e., church members

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and pastors) through her own teachings and through the words of her commentaries.

John, who was led by the angel to the desert, is greatly astonished (tested) when he sees that the woman is drunk on the blood of the saints and on the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. This is when the angel shows John the mystery. John was led to the desert and tested in Rv 17 in the same way that Jesus was led by the spirit to the desert for testing in Mt 4:1-11. The desert is the place for being tested by the devil.

Revelation 17:7-13 is about the process by which the seven-headed beast on which the prostitute sits, its ten horns, and the eighth king all appear. The seven heads are called seven mountains and seven kings, and therefore, they represent seven pastors (kings) of seven denominations (mountains). The beast which once was, now is not, and is about to come up from the abyss is referred to as an eighth king. Although he is not one of the seven pastors from the sea, he unites with them and ultimately seizes their authority. Since, however, the eighth king cannot fully unite with the seven pastors, just as the iron and clay in Dn 2 do not mix, the eighth king ends up going a separate way. This eighth king is also the beast from the earth that is mentioned in Rv 13. He belongs to the same group and holds the same position as the seven kings, but because he appears later, he is called the eighth king. At this time, the ten authority figures, who are figuratively called ten horns, unite with the eighth king and work under him. To repeat the numbers, there are seven kings, ten horns, and one more king. In total, there are

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eight kings and ten horns. This is the testimony of the person who saw these actual events.

Jesus calls out the believers who are trapped in the organization of the prostitute (Babylon). The beast, which united with the ten horns, judges the prostitute that is sitting on many waters. He even takes the prostitute's kingdom, Babylon, and makes it his own. God gave them a heart to act this way, according to God's purpose, until God's words are fulfilled. This is how God has fulfilled the recorded prophecies. Anyone who drinks the wine of adultery (i.e., the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the venom of serpents), which is in the prostitute's hand, becomes a part of the beast's group and will be unable to escape the punishment of hell.

All the events prophesied in Rv 17 have already been physically fulfilled.

Revelation 18

After the events of Rv 17, John says that another angel comes down from heaven to proclaim that the great city Babylon has fallen. The angel says that Babylon has become a home for demons—a gathering place for all kinds of unclean spirits. All nations have been destroyed by the maddening wine of Babylon's adulteries, and the kings of the earth have all committed adultery with her (Rv 18:1-3).

Everyone who reads this chapter should be surprised because the drinking of the wine of adultery in Rv 18 happens on such a large scale. Jesus prophesied that at the end times for Christianity the dragon's group (i.e., the prostitute riding the beast with seven

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heads and ten horns) appears to destroy the chosen people. The wine of adultery, given by the prostitute, has the power and authority to destroy all nations.

At that time, the merchants (i.e., evangelists) will have become wealthy through the extravagance and power of the wine of adultery. All nations will be deceived and will have spiritually married the devil as their groom. Adam's world came to an end through the flood because of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Today, the world of Christianity comes to an end and all nations are destroyed because of the maddening wine of adultery. Are these two events different? Revelation 18 reveals the destruction of the Christian world. Luke 17:26-27 says that the days of the Son of Man will be just like the time of Noah when people did not understand what was happening until the flood came to destroy them.

What is the wine of adultery, which has destroyed the prostitute, the kings of the earth, and the inhabitants of the earth? Is it different from the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which killed Adam and Eve? The Bible says that anyone who eats the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil will die, and anyone who eats the fruit of the tree of life will live eternally (Gn 2:17, 3:22). For this reason the maddening wine of adultery is the same as the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

As in Rv 17, the maddening wine of adultery represents the false teachings the prostitute receives when she commits sexual immorality with evil spirits. The prostitute uses those teachings

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to insist she is orthodox. She considers anyone who refuses to unite with her to be a heretic. All the churches in this world are spiritually destroyed by the teachings (biblical commentaries) that the prostitute claims to be truth. This is what it means for all the nations to have fallen. How could the believers of this world ever have dreamed about this kind of event occurring? The kings of the earth, who have committed adultery with the prostitute, are pastors who follow the prostitute and who have committed sexual immorality with Satan. The merchants of the earth are evangelists who spiritually buy and sell the word. The merchants of the earth have done business with and have become rich with the help of the Babylonian prostitute and her teachings.

In Rv 18:4, John hears, "Come out of her, my people, so you will not take part in her sins and so you will not receive her plagues." Just as God called Lot and his family out of Sodom before judging it, God calls believers who have been captured by Babylon out through the word. According to Rv 17:14, the one who calls and pulls people out of Babylon is Jesus. It is through John, however, that Jesus calls captured believers out of Babylon.

The kings of the earth, who committed adultery with the prostitute of Babylon and shared in her excessive luxuries, cry when they see the smoke of the fire that burns her up. The merchants of the earth also mourn because no one buys their goods anymore (Rv 18:9-11). This means that the pastors (kings) that united with the prostitute and the evangelists (merchants) that became wealthy by depending on her all lament when God judges the prostitute

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with his fiery word. The goods the merchants of the earth used to sell were their teachings, their ecclesiastical laws, and their ecclesiastical authority.

In addition to the kings and merchants of the earth, every sea captain, all who travel by ship, and all the sailors—everyone who earns their living from the sea—mourns when the prostitute is judged. The sea is the world. A sea captain is a pastor. Those who travel by ship are churchgoers. Sailors are church workers and leaders. Ships represent churches. They mourn when they see Babylon being judged because they grew wealthy by means of the Babylonian goods (commentaries).

When he judges Babylon, God avenges the blood of the martyrs. Since the spirits of demons, which killed the martyrs of the past generations, have gathered under the prostitute of Babylon in the last days, judging them is the same as judging the enemies of the martyrs. In Rv 18:24 the angel says that the blood of all the martyrs can be found in Babylon. Everyone who repents after seeing Babylon judged will attain salvation.

Babylon will never be seen in this world again after it is judged. That is why the light of Babylon's lamp will never be seen in her again, and neither will workman of any trade. The sounds of the harp, trumpet, and millstone will not be heard anymore. This means that the teachings of Babylon have disappeared. Furthermore, the voice of the bridegroom and bride will never be heard in Babylon again. This means that the devil will no longer be allowed to marry

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and unite with believers' spirits like a bridegroom marries and unites with his bride.

Regarding Jesus destroying Babylon and making it disappear, Dn 2:34-35 says that a cut rock strikes the Babylonian idol and makes it disappear like chaff blown away by the wind. That rock represents both God's word of judgment and Jesus (Mt 21:42-44; 1 Pt 2:4). It also represents the pastor Jesus promised. God gave the word to Jesus, and Jesus gave it to his promised pastor (Rv 2:17).

Is there anyone right now in this world who really knows the Bible? According to the prophecies of Rv 18, all nations have been deceived. How can anyone judge anyone else as belonging to orthodoxy or to a cult? I wish that all nations, pastors and lay people alike, would come to know and understand the reality of the physical fulfillment of Revelation. I also wish that they will find the pastor promised by God and Jesus despite being in the midst of the world that has been deceived by the demons of Babylon. That promised pastor is the person who possesses all that Jesus promised in Rv 2-3.

The Nicolaitans of Rv 2; the mountains, caves, and rocks of Rv 6; the star that fell from heaven; the locusts and horses of Rv 8; the beasts from the abyss of Rv 11; and the beast with seven heads and ten horns of Rv 12-13 are all clans of Babylon's demons. The kings of the earth, merchants, sea captain, sailors, those who travel by ship, and all who earn their living from the sea are also people of Babylon. All of them have had relations with the devil and have been evangelizing with the devil's teachings.

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Who has enough wisdom to know the true identity of Babylon's pastors? Do you realize where you belong? The blood of all the martyrs God has sent has been found in Babylon, and all of God's righteous people have been persecuted as a cult because of the religious influence, ecclesiastical authority, and ecclesiastical laws of Babylon (the devil). Therefore, it is only right for Babylon to be judged. After Babylon is judged, the devil can no longer marry people through his false pastors, and the wedding banquet of the real bridegroom, Jesus the Lamb, begins (Rv 19).

The events prophesied in Rv 18 have already been physically fulfilled.

Revelation 19

After the judgment of Babylon, John heard "what sounded like the loud voice of a vast throng in heaven, saying, 'Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, because his judgments are true and just. For he has judged the great prostitute who corrupted the earth with her sexual immorality, and has avenged the blood of his servants poured out by her own hands!'" (Rv 19:1-2).

This vast throng is made up of the believers who escaped Babylon (Rv 17:14, 18:4). They know that Babylon, which deceived all nations, is judged, and now they can say, "Salvation and glory and power belong to our God," (Rv 19:1). By judging the great prostitute who deceived all nations, God judges the devil, which worked through the prostitute, and he avenges the blood of the martyrs.

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The smoke from the burning of the great prostitute rises forever and ever (Rv 19:3), and the sound of praising God continues eternally (Rv 19:4-6). It is the smoke that proclaims that the prostitute has been judged. Since the smoke rises forever, her judgment is proclaimed forever as the eternal gospel. The kings of the earth who committed adultery with the prostitute of Babylon, the merchants of the earth who became rich because of the prostitute, and all the ship captains will mourn when they see the prostitute burning (Rv 18), but the spirits in the heaven of Rv 19 worship and praise God as they call out to one another. If Satan, who deceived Adam and took possession of all things under heaven and earth, is punished, and if the blood of the martyrs is avenged, is it not something to be joyful about for eternity?

Now the time for the wedding banquet of the Lamb has come. Since the bride of the Lamb has made herself ready, God clothes her with fine linen, bright and clean. Revelation 19:7-8 says the fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints. In Rv 19:9, the angel says that those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb are blessed. This wedding refers to the holy spirit of Jesus entering believer's hearts; it refers to the unification of spirit and flesh. Regarding this, Jesus said, "If anyone hears my voice and opens the door I will come into his home and share a meal with him, and he with me," (Rv 3:20). Again, all believers should know that the wedding banquet is held only after the judgment of Babylon in Rv 18.

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The wedding banquet of the Lamb is held in the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony (Rv 15:5) to which God and Jesus have come after God's oxen and fattened beasts are captured (Mt 22:1-14; Rv 19:18). The oxen are God's servants, who betrayed him, and the fattened beasts are those who destroyed God's people. Stated more concretely, God's oxen are the seven messengers of the church of the seven golden lampstands, and the fattened beasts are the false pastors who destroyed the congregation members of the church of the seven golden lampstands. The capture of God's oxen and fattened beasts refers to the judgment of the betrayers and destroyers with the word of testimony. The words that testify against the betrayers and destroyers are the spiritual food for the believers gathered at the wedding banquet. Therefore, this also becomes the evidence that can confirm the identity of the location of the wedding banquet. No place can be the location of the promised wedding banquet without this testimony. This is why the wedding banquet of the Lamb must take place after the judgment of the betrayers and destroyers.

Although many people are invited and come to the location of the wedding banquet, only a few are allowed to participate in the wedding. The Bible says many are invited but few are chosen (Mt 22:14). Only those who have prepared the lamp and the oil mentioned by Jesus (Mt 25:1-13), along with the wedding clothes (Rv 22:1-14), will be allowed to participate in the wedding banquet. The lamp is the Bible (Ps 119:105), the oil is the word that testifies

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to the physical fulfillment of the prophecies of the Bible, and the wedding clothes are righteous acts (Rv 19:7-8).

Jesus and the angels have shown and explained to John all the events of the book of Revelation that we have discussed up to this point. How thankful and joyful we should be!

In Rv 19:10, when John falls at the angel's feet to worship him, the angel says, "Do not do this! I am only a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold to the testimony about Jesus. Worship God, for the testimony about Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." The testimony of Jesus is conveyed in order from the angel to John and from John to the servants of God. There are, thus, two entities who speak on behalf of Jesus: the angel in the spiritual world and Apostle John in the physical world. The angel in the spiritual world is the holy spirit of truth—the advocate. These two become one to convey the prophecies and physical fulfillment of Revelation. This is just like what happened in the first coming when the angels came to Jesus and worked with him (Mt 3:16; Jn 1:51).

John sees heaven open and someone called "Faithful and True" riding a white horse leading the armies of God (Rv 19:11). The rider, also called the word of God, is wearing a robe dipped in blood (Rv 19:13). He has the name "King of kings and Lord of lords" written on his robe and on his thigh (Rv 19:16). This rider of the white horse is clearly Jesus and the armies of heaven that follow him on white horses are God's thousands upon thousands and ten thousand times ten thousand angels. In Ps 103:21, the angels are referred to as a heavenly army. The spirit chooses one flesh as

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its horse and works through that person. At the second coming, Jesus chooses the one who overcomes (Rv 3:12) as his horse and works through him (Rv 6:2).

John also sees a sharp sword coming out of the mouth of the rider (Jesus) of the white horse, which he will use to strike down the nations. It says the rider will rule all the nations with an iron scepter and stomp the winepress of the furious wrath of God. This sword is God's word (Eph 6:17). Jesus said, "The word I have spoken will judge him at the last day," (Jn 12:48). Jesus also said that he had received the authority of the iron scepter from his Father (Rv 2:27). This iron scepter is the word of truth that judges and rules over the entire world. Jesus promised that he would give this scepter and the right to rule all nations to the one who fights against and defeats the Nicolaitans (Rv 2:26). This is how we know that in the end times, God and Jesus will reign over the nations through the pastor Jesus promised.

Next, an angel standing in the sun cries in a loud voice, telling all the birds flying in midair to come to the great banquet of God in order to eat the meat that has been captured (Rv 19:17-18). The sun is the pastor who emits the light of truth. The birds that are invited to the great supper of God are the spirits of the martyrs (Mt 3:16). The meat of the kings, generals, powerful people, and of the horses and their riders represents the betrayers and destroyers mentioned earlier.

The beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies gather to make war against the rider of the white horse and his army. At

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this time, however, the beast from the sea and the false prophet (the beast that came up from the earth), who performed miracles before him, are thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. The rest of the beast's group are killed with the sword that comes out of the mouth of the rider, and all the birds grow full on their meat. Everyone in the group of the destroyers is judged by Jesus' words, and all the spirits of the martyrs are satisfied as they listen to the words that testify against the destroyers. Although the devil, who captured God's people, previously held the authority of death, death is swallowed up by life after God's wedding banquet.

When Jesus spoke about a wedding banquet in passages like Mt 22, Mt 25, Lk 13:29, and Lk 14, he was the referring to the wedding banquet of Rv 19. Those who are invited to the wedding banquet of the Lamb are blessed, but if they are invited and fail to come, they will be cursed (Mt 22:14; Lk 14:16-24).

We at Shincheonji have captured God's oxen and fattened beasts and are inviting guests to the wedding banquet. Come and see for yourself whether it is true or false! People who truly believe in the new covenant will come, but those who do not believe in the Lord's promised new covenant will not come. Everyone is free to choose, but this choice is a choice between heaven and hell (Dt 30:19-20).

Although Noah cried out for many days before the flood came while he was making the ark, the people did not listen and were destroyed. In the time of his first coming, Jesus cried out to the chosen people of Israel, but instead of gathering around him, they could think only of killing him. Today, too, the pastors who have

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committed adultery with the prostitute and the people of the earth who belong to them will refuse to attend the banquet. Only those who truly believe in God and God's word will participate in the wedding banquet held at the spiritual Mt. Zion.

The events prophesied in Rv 19 are being fulfilled now through Shincheonji.

Revelation 20

Several events happen in Rv 20. The dragon is locked up in the abyss for 1,000 years. Then, he is released temporarily before going back into the abyss. The spirits of the martyrs and those who are alive participate in the first resurrection with Christ. They are located inside the city of the millennium. After the 1,000 years, Gog and Magog, who are still outside the city, are destroyed. The earth and the sky flee away because there is no place for them. The dead are judged, and death and Hades are thrown into the lake of fire (the second death).

The world of the millennium and judgment

✦ [1]Then I saw an angel descending from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the abyss and a huge chain. [2]He seized the dragon – the ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan – and tied him up for a thousand years. [3]The angel then threw him into the abyss and locked and sealed it so that he could not deceive the nations until the one thousand years were finished. (After these things he must be released for a brief period of time.) (Rv 20:1-3)

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The passage above reveals that after the beast of Rv 13 is judged in Rv 16, and after the beast and the false prophet are captured and thrown into the lake of fire in Rv 19, the dragon is captured in Rv 20 and locked up in the abyss.

The chain the angel uses to capture the dragon is the promised word of truth. The abyss (Lk 8:31) is Hades, from which the devil comes. This hell is elsewhere referred to as Babylon, which according to the footnotes in most versions of Rv 18:2, is the prison-like home of demons. The key to the abyss is the wisdom that can imprison or release Satan. The dragon of Rv 20 is the ancient serpent, which appeared in Gn 3; he is the devil and Satan. From the time of Adam, the dragon has been ruling over the kingdom of the air and over all creation. When Rv 20 is fulfilled, however, Satan will be locked up again in the abyss from which he came (Rv 9:1), and he will remain there for 1,000 years (Rv 20:1-3).

The dragon is locked up so he cannot deceive the nations ever again. The dragon is released only briefly after 1,000 years before being thrown into the lake of burning sulfur to be punished for eternity. For the past 6,000 years the martyrs have shed their blood and all of creation has been under death because of the existence of entities like this dragon. As soon as the ruler of death is locked up, life begins to reign.

The first resurrection and the city of the millennium

✦ 4Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because

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> of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. [5]The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. [6]Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years." (Rv 20:4-6, NASB)

Who are those who sit on thrones and have been given the authority to judge? They are the twelve apostles (Mt 19:28; Lk 22:30), who died as martyrs. They, along with the twelve tribe leaders who are created today, sit on the twelve thrones of New Spiritual Israel and rule over its twelve tribes (Rv 7:4, 14:1-5).

The souls of those who were martyred because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God will reign with Christ for 1,000 years along with those who, while living, refused to worship the beast and its idol in Rv 13 or to receive its mark on their foreheads or their hands (Rv 14:1-5, 15:2-5). This is the first resurrection. Those who participate in the first resurrection are not harmed by the second death. Instead, they become the priests of God and Christ, and they reign with Christ for 1,000 years. In 1 Cor 15:51-54, Paul says that people whose flesh has died in the Lord will live again with a spiritual body, and those of us who are alive will be changed; we will be given a body that will neither die

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nor decay. This passage in 1 Corinthians is physically fulfilled by the spirits and flesh that participate in the first resurrection in Rv 20.

It also says, however, that the rest of the dead cannot live until the 1,000 years are over. These people did not die as martyrs. They are the souls of people who believed in God and Jesus, but still died. They will be judged after the period of the kingdom of the millennium according to their deeds as recorded in the books. At that time they will either receive salvation in the spirit or be condemned to the second death.

There are two kinds of death in the Bible—death of the flesh and death of the spirit. Some people's spirit and flesh are changed so that they live, but some people's spirit and flesh both die. There are also some people whose bodies have died, but whose spirits remain alive (Mt 8:22, 10:28; Lk 12:4-5; 1 Cor 15:51-54; Jn 5:24-29, 11:25-26; Rv 20:4-6).

Paul said that flesh and blood, which is perishable, cannot inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor 15:50). Flesh that has died once cannot live again. Spirits, however, regardless of whether or not they have a physical body, can live again by listening to God's word. Spirits that lack physical bodies and that have fallen asleep in the Lord will live in spiritual bodies at the time of the resurrection.

Spirits go to hell because they have sinned. Spirits and flesh live together when they are born again as a new and holy creation. The spirits that have lost their bodies for the sake of the Lord will clothe themselves with our physical bodies and be resurrected. Again, the spirits in heaven and the spirits of those who are still

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on this earth resurrect together as one body (i.e., a spiritual and physical union within one body). Then, they reign together for 1,000 years. This city of the millennium is, as mentioned in Rv 20:9, the city God loves. The spirits of the martyrs (Rv 6:9), along with those who are sealed by God and the Lamb (Rv 14) after refusing the mark of the beast in Rv 13, live with Jesus Christ in this city of the millennium.

After the millennium

> [7]Now when the thousand years are finished, Satan will be released from his prison [8]and will go out to deceive the nations at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to bring them together for the battle. They are as numerous as the grains of sand in the sea. [9]They went up on the broad plain of the earth and encircled the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and devoured them completely. [10]And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet are too, and they will be tormented there day and night forever and ever. (Rv 20:7-10)

Satan, after having been imprisoned in the abyss for the promised period of 1,000 years, will come out to deceive people from the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog. He will gather them and surround the camp of God's people, the city God loves, in order to fight against God.

Then, fire will come down from heaven to devour the attackers. Gog and Magog, who are deceived by the devil, are the people

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who were unable to enter the city of the millennium. They will be devoured by fire according to 2 Pt 3:7. The devil that deceives Gog and Magog, will be thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet, who appear in Rv 13 and 19, are already burning. There they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

The holy city, the dwelling place of the holy ones who participated in the first resurrection, will neither be destroyed nor even harmed by the devil. Since the people dwelling in the city of the millennium know that the devil will be released after the 1,000 years are over, they will not be deceived into betraying God. They have already fought against and defeated the devil with the truth. They cannot be deceived because they have mastered the Bible and live together with the souls of the martyrs and with Jesus Christ.

The judgment of the dead

✥ [11]Then I saw a large white throne and the one who was seated on it; the earth and the heaven fled from his presence, and no place was found for them. [12]And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne. Then books were opened, and another book was opened – the book of life. So the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to their deeds. [13]The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and Death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each one was judged according to his deeds. [14]Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death – the lake of fire. [15]If anyone's name was not found

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written in the book of life, that person was thrown into the lake of fire. (Rv 20:11-15)

According to this passage, where do heaven and earth go when they flee from the presence of the one seated on the great white throne? Those who receive the authority to judge in Rv 20:4 are with the one seated on the white throne. The heaven and earth in this passage do not refer to the Lord's beloved city of the millennium. The people in the city of the millennium are with Christ. They were never captured or destroyed by the beast, as others were in Rv 13. They never fled to the caves and rocks of the gentiles, as others did in Rv 6.

The heaven and earth in Rv 20:11 are not the heaven and earth of Rv 6. According to Rv 19:6, the 1,000 years of the devil's imprisonment are a time when God reigns and a time of healing[4]. People who want to enter the city of God must be part of God's tabernacle, which acts as a laundromat for the washing of people's spiritual clothes (Rv 22:14). This tabernacle and its people are referred to as heaven and earth. If this tabernacle and people were to be deceived by the devil, who comes out of the abyss 1,000 years later, they would be devoured by the fire from heaven, just as it is written in the prophecy of Rv 20:9-10.

This passage says, however, that heaven and earth merely flee from the presence of the one who judges and that there is no

4 – The Korean word for heal is *soseong* (소성 or 蘇醒). The first Chinese character means *to revive* and the second character means *to awaken* or *to open one's eyes.*

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place for them. They are not participating in this judgment and are not harmed by the second death mentioned in Rv 20:14. The dead, great and small, however, are standing before the throne to receive judgment. When heaven and earth flee because there is no place for them, they have escaped judgment. It does not mean they went somewhere else. Their flight is just a flight from the place the dead are judged.

In addition, everyone is equal before the one who judges; there is no designation of rank dividing people into heaven and earth. The dead, whether of high position (heaven) or low position (earth), will receive judgment from the one who is seated on the great white throne, just as it says in Rv 20:4 and 11.

This passage mentions the books that are opened when judgment is handed down. Those books are the 66 books of the Bible and the book of life. The dead are judged according to what they have done and are either sent to heaven or hell. These dead are the dead people mentioned in Rv 20:5 who could not participate in the first resurrection. They also include all the spirits who died outside the holy city because they could not enter during the period of the millennial kingdom. Those who are inside the city of the millennium, however, have participated in the first resurrection. They are not judged because they are blessed and holy.

The sea, death, and Hades give up the dead that are in them. Then, death and Hades are thrown into the lake of fire, which is the second death. Anyone whose name is not written in the book of life is thrown into the lake of fire.

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Let us find out more about the book of life. The book of life is the registry of heaven that records the names of God's people. According to Revelation, God and Jesus are with the promised pastor who fought against and defeated Satan's group. The throne of God and Jesus is also with the promised pastor (Rv 3:21). God's name, the name of the holy city New Jerusalem, and Jesus' new name are all recorded on the one who overcomes (Rv 3:12). Therefore, at the second coming, being registered as a member of one of the twelve tribes that are led by the one who overcomes is the same as being recorded in the book of life. Names can be recorded clearly in the book of life (Rv 3:5), but they can also be blotted out or smudged (Ps 69:28). There are passages about the book of life all throughout the Bible (Ex 32:32; Ps 69:28; Phil 4:3; Rv 3:5, 13:8, 17:8, 20:12, 20:15, 21:27). For a more detailed explanation, please read the book entitled *The Secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven: The Physical Fulfillment of Revelation*, which I also wrote.

All the souls who could not participate in the first resurrection (Rv 20:12) and all the people outside the city receive the judgment of Rv 20 a thousand years later (Rv 20:9). Also, the beast, the false prophet (Rv 19:20), the sea, death, Hades, and the devil are all thrown into the lake of fire, which is the second death. This is how the judgment of evil—both spirit and flesh—is finally completed.

Revelation 21

In Rv 21:1-2, John wrote that when he saw a new heaven and a new earth, the first heaven, the first earth, and the sea had all ceased

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to exist. He also wrote that he saw the holy city New Jerusalem descending out of heaven. What are the first heaven and first earth? What are the new heaven and new earth? What is the sea that ceases to exist, and what is the holy city New Jerusalem? If the holy city New Jerusalem descends on the new heaven and new earth, what is the heaven from which it comes? Where does this holy city actually descend?

This chapter concerns the holy city and what will take place as the holy city New Jerusalem in the spiritual realm descends upon the new heaven and the new earth. It has been about 2,000 years since John saw, heard, and recorded the events of Rv 21, but no one has ever been able to clearly explain this issue. This is because God poured out on them a strong urge to sleep deeply and he sealed the scriptures (Is 29:9-13). If today is the time when the sealed book has been opened, this entire problem will be resolved, and the recorded prophecies will appear in the form of physical fulfillment. Questions about the Bible must be resolved using the Bible. If someone says, "It is this," or "It is that," according to man's criteria, who would believe it?

Heaven in Rv 21 refers to the tabernacle of God's chosen people. If the chosen people are described as the sun, moon, and stars (Gn 37:9-11), the tabernacle where the chosen people dwell is heaven. If the tabernacle is heaven, then its people represent the earth (Gn 2:7, 3:19). The heaven and earth that disappear, and the heaven and earth that are newly created both refer to God's tabernacles and their congregation members.

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God judged his chosen people in every generation, bringing them to an end, because they kept becoming corrupt. God created a new chosen people every time he brought the previous chosen people to an end. There is a more detailed explanation of this concept in "Part 2: A treatise on the creation of heaven and earth." The previous world that passes away is the first heaven and the first earth, and the world that is newly created becomes the new heaven and the new earth.

The first heaven and first earth in Rv 21 refer to the Christian world (Spiritual Israel), which was created during Jesus' first coming. The new heaven and the new earth refer to New Spiritual Israel, which is created at the time of Jesus' second coming. New Spiritual Israel is God's new kingdom and people created in the time of the end through the harvesting of grain-like believers from the churches of Jesus. The time of the harvest is also referred to as the end of the world. At this time the missions of the churches of Jesus—the fields in which the seed of the word has been growing—come to an end. This is also when all the weeds are tied in bundles and burned.

In the final days of the Christian world, the church of the seven golden lampstands appears according to the prophecies in the book of Revelation, but is also judged and brought to an end (Rv 6, 8-9, 16-18). This church is judged after its people disobey God's word and unite with the group of Satan (Rv 2-3, 13). When the church of the seven golden lampstands, which represents the

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entire Christian world of Spiritual Israel, comes to an end, the first heaven and the first earth have disappeared.

Next, let us consider the sea that also disappears. The sea refers to the group of the beast with seven heads and ten horns (Rv 13:1-2) that is under the dragon's (Satan's) control. Furthermore, it refers to the world from which the group of the beast comes (Dn 7:3, 17). The beast with seven heads and ten horns represents the destroyers who destroy the tabernacle of heaven. Since the sea was explained fully in the sections regarding Rv 13 and 17 it will not be discussed further here.

Although the destroyers, who are portrayed as many waters (Rv 17:1, 3, 15), entered the tabernacle of heaven (Rv 13), there is no longer any sea at this point because they were thrown outside into the world and scattered in the process (Rv 12). The destroyers are successful in destroying the first heaven and the first earth (God's tabernacle and its congregation members), but, in the end, their group is also judged and scattered (Rv 16-18). This is why the many waters of the sea cease to exist.

What, then, is the holy city New Jerusalem, which is coming down from heaven? Heaven in this verse refers to the spiritual realm. The holy city is heaven in the spiritual realm, which is composed of God, Jesus, and the souls of the martyrs. This is what Gal 4:26 refers to when it refers to Jesus as the "Jerusalem above." The holy city New Jerusalem is God's kingdom in the spiritual realm that centers around Jesus and the twelve disciples. The name

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"New Jerusalem" draws attention to the fact that the kingdom is being newly created after the time of Jesus.

As God's tabernacle of New Jerusalem is being newly created in the spiritual realm, the second tabernacle—the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony (Rv 15:5)—is being established on Earth. This happens in the last days after God's first tabernacle is destroyed (Rv 13). This is how God's will is done "on earth as it is in heaven" (Mt 6:10).

If that is the case, when and where will the tabernacle in the spiritual realm, the city of New Jerusalem, descend? After the first heaven and earth pass away, New Jerusalem descends upon the new heaven and new earth (Shincheonji). In other words, after the church of the seven golden lampstands is brought to an end according to the prophecy in Rv 6, the spiritual heaven descends on the twelve tribes of New Spiritual Israel, which are created according to the words of Rv 7. God's name, Jesus' new name, and the name of the holy city New Jerusalem will be written on the one who overcomes the group of Satan (Rv 3:12). The twelve tribes of Rv 7 are the same as the twelve tribes of Rv 14. This is where God's throne and the organization surrounding it are located. In Rv 15, those who overcome stand beside the sea of glass, before the throne. Therefore, the new heaven and new earth refer to the tabernacle at Mt. Zion and the 144,000 people who are created in Rv 14 after the first heaven and earth disappear in Rv 13.

When this happens, since God and his tabernacle in the spiritual realm have been united with his people, and since the former

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things will have passed away, there will be no more death, mourning, crying, or pain. Paradise will be established (Rv 21:3-4). Just as Paul wrote that "the last enemy to be eliminated is death" (1 Cor 15:26), after the thousand years, death and Hades will be thrown into the lake of fire, which is the second death (Rv 20:14). At that time, the whole world, not just the city of the millennium, will become an eternal paradise.

This is when God renews all things and gives the water of life free of charge to those who are thirsty. The one who overcomes becomes a son who receives God's inheritance (Rv 21:5-7). Since the one who overcomes was already mentioned in the sections concerning Rv 2, 3, 12, 15, and 17, no further explanation will be given.

God is restoring all things to their original state of creation because Satan perverted the creation to follow his thoughts; he twisted it until it was made in his own image. This work of restoration is the fulfillment of all the prophecies in the Old and New Testaments. It is the completion of the 6,000-year work of recovery that God began after Adam's fall (Alpha and Omega: the beginning and the end). The water from the spring of life, which God provides free of cost, refers to the word that comes from the throne of God and Jesus (Jn 4:14; Rv 22:1). This word, which is the water of life, can be heard through the promised pastor, the one who overcomes. This is because the throne of God and Jesus is with the one who overcomes (Rv 3:12, 21). Since the holy city New Jerusalem descends upon the new heaven and new earth,

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Shincheonji itself becomes the holy city—the same holy city that is mentioned in Rv 22:19.

It is written clearly, however, that the place for the cowards, unbelievers, detestable persons, murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic spells, idol worshipers, and all those who lie, will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur—the second death (Rv 21:8). These people include those who refuse to obey God out of fear and disbelief, those who practice evil deeds, those who kill people's spirits, those who claim to believe in God while accepting Satan's teachings, and those who make false prophecies or false testimonies.

At this time, one of the seven angels who had one of the seven bowls (Rv 15:7) told John, "I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb." The angel took John away in the spirit to a huge, majestic mountain and showed him the holy city New Jerusalem (Rv 21:9-10). The angel took John away in the spirit once before when he took him to a desert to show John the judgment that would come upon the great prostitute (Rv 17:1-3). John wrote that the city of New Jerusalem descending from heaven looked like a bride adorned for her husband (Rv 21:2).

Why is New Jerusalem described as the bride of the Lamb? The reason for this is that New Jerusalem is built with the spiritual brides of Jesus, the spirits of his disciples. Jesus, who is the groom, gave the seed of the word to his disciples and appointed them to evangelize. This is like a physical bride that gives birth to her groom's children and raises them. This is why the disciples played the role of Jesus'

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spiritual brides. This can be easily understood through the words of Paul, who wrote, "I am again undergoing birth pains," (Gal 4:19). The names of the twelve disciples, who helped Jesus as his spiritual brides, are written on the twelve foundations of the holy city (Rv 21:14). Moreover, Apostle Paul described Jesus, who gave birth to twelve sons through the spiritual seed he received from God, as "Jerusalem above, that is to say, our mother," (Gal 4:26).

The holy city is laid out as a square; its length, width, and height are each 12,000 stadia. Its wall measures 144 cubits, and the city is pure gold, like transparent glass (Rv 21:16-18). The twelve gates are twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl (Rv 21:21). This means that the twelve apostles, who act as the gates of the holy city, all possess the same truth.

Since God and the Lamb are its temple, there is no need for a separate temple in the city. Also, because the glory of God shines upon all the nations and the Lamb is its lamp, there is no need for the sun or the moon to shine. There is no night in the city, and so its gates will never be closed. Everyone will bring honor and glory into the city (Rv 21:22-26). The sun and the moon in this passage refer to pastors and evangelists. The night refers to darkened spirits. Because God and Jesus are the pastors of light in this city, there is no need for any other pastors to exist. In addition, only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life are able to enter this holy city (Rv 21:27).

Because the book of life was fully explained along with Rv 20, I will not give any further explanation here.

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The conclusion of Revelation 21

Revelation 21 and 22 summarize all the events of the book of Revelation, which God has shown to John. Revelation 21 and 22 are not a detailed description of the process by which the new heaven and earth are created. Since the dead, death, and Hades are destroyed in Rv 20, such that they no longer exist, the unbelievers, dogs, sorcerers, and liars are no longer invited to wash their robes and enter God's city with God's people. All these events come to an end in Rv 20.

The new heaven and new earth

The new heaven and new earth represent the city of the millennium, the twelve tribes of New Spiritual Israel, which are being created today through the harvest of grain-like believers. This is where the holy city New Jerusalem descends and resides. Physical Israel came to an end at Jesus' first coming roughly 2,000 years ago. That was when Spiritual Israel—the Christian world—was created. This world too, however, must come to an end at the time of Revelation's fulfillment. Now, New Spiritual Israel's city of the millennium is created as God's kingdom and people. This is where those who participate in the first resurrection gather to live. No one who reads this book should be like Lot's wife, who tried to return to the previous world that was judged. May all believers find the shelter of salvation—Shincheonji.

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The first heaven, first earth, and sea that pass away

According to the prophecies in Rv 6 and 13, the first heaven, first earth, and the sea cease to exist before the millennium begins. These things that must pass away disappear as Rv 20 is being fulfilled, and since the false prophets, the beasts, the devil, death, and Hades are thrown into the second death, I will not discuss them further here. Just because their destruction is also mentioned in the beginning of Rv 21 and 22 does not mean that it actually takes place after Rv 20.

The false prophets and the beasts are thrown into the fiery lake of burning sulfur before the millennium begins (Rv 19:20), but Satan, the devil, will be locked up in the abyss during the millennium. After 1,000 years, Satan will be released and will deceive Gog and Magog. Satan will surround the believers' camp, the city that God loves, but fire will come down from heaven and consume Gog and Magog. The angels will capture Satan and throw him into the fiery lake of burning sulfur to join the beast and the false prophets. They will be tormented there day and night forever and ever.

The new heaven and new earth are those who participate in the first resurrection, along with the city of the millennium where they dwell. Since they are the place where the holy city descends, they will never disappear. The only things that disappear are the heaven and the earth from Rv 6, as well as Gog and Magog. There is no prophecy that God's people and tabernacle will be deceived by Gog and Magog when they are mentioned in Rv 20:7-10. It says that the sea gives up its dead, but it does not say that the sea

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disappears. Neither does it say that the new heaven and new earth are created 1,000 years later. The only things that disappear are Gog and Magog.

One thing should again be clarified here. As mentioned earlier, the events of the book of Revelation are concluded in Rv 20; the words of Rv 21 and 22 are repeated explanations regarding the events that take place up to and including Rv 20. This can be more easily understood with examples.

First, Rv 21:8 says that the place of the cowards, unbelievers, detestable persons, murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic spells, idol worshipers, and all those who lie will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death. Revelation 22:15 says that these people will be outside of the city. How can this be if they already went into the fiery lake of burning sulfur when they were judged in Rv 20:12-15.

Second, Rv 22:3-4 says, "The throne of God and the Lamb will be in the city. His servants will worship him, and they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads." In Rv 14, however, God's name and the name of the Lamb are already written on the foreheads of 144,000 people who are gathered at Mt. Zion. Furthermore, God's throne is already with them as well. These people, according to Rv 22:5, will reign as kings forever and ever.

Just as the events of Rv 13 are included in the events of Rv 12, the holy city New Jerusalem, according to the promise of Rv 3:12, has descended upon the tabernacle described in Rv 14 and 15. This tabernacle is the gathering place for those who are victorious over

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the beast in Rv 12 and 13. After that, according to the prophecies in Rv 16-19, those who have overcome judge the beast and Babylon (the prostitute). Thus, Rv 21 repeats what is recorded up to and including Rv 20. It has been said a number of times that when the 144,000 people who are sealed by God's seal are gathered, God's kingdom in the spiritual realm will descend and unite with them.

Revelation 22

✥ [1]Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life – water as clear as crystal – pouring out from the throne of God and of the Lamb, [2]flowing down the middle of the city's main street. On each side of the river is the tree of life producing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month of the year. Its leaves are for the healing of the nations. [3]And there will no longer be any curse, and the throne of God and the Lamb will be in the city. His servants will worship him, [4]and they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. [5]Night will be no more, and they will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, because the Lord God will shine on them, and they will reign forever and ever. (Rv 22:1-5)

The content of Rv 22 follows Rv 21, and it introduces the holy city that descends from heaven to its people.

What is the water of life flowing from the throne? It refers to God's perfect word that is flawless and contains life-giving power (Dt 32:1-2; Am 8:11). The river through which this water of life flows refers to the hearts of disciples who deliver God's word (Jn 7:38).

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The creation can only survive and our spirits can only live when God's word, which is figuratively called both water and light, is present. Jesus said that those born of the water and the holy spirit could enter heaven (Jn 3:5). This water of life is the word of God that flows from the throne down the middle of the street. The tree of life is able to grow and yield twelve kinds of fruit because of this water of life. In Rv 1:1-3, God's word is delivered to Jesus, Jesus delivers it to the angel, the angel delivers it to John, and John delivers it to the servants. Revelation 1:1-3 also says that those who obey the words are blessed. As recorded in Rv 5, 6, 8, and 10, the sealed scroll in God's hand is given to Jesus, who breaks the seals and opens the scroll. Jesus then gives it to an angel, and that angel gives it to John. Through John, the words of the scroll are conveyed to nations, peoples, languages, and kings. This is the original water of life, as clear as crystal. This is not water that has been translated incorrectly or contaminated by people's commentaries.

The holy city in the spiritual realm descends upon the new heaven and new earth (Shincheonji) and unites with it. Therefore, the throne of God and of Jesus, the water of life, and the river of the water of life are all in Shincheonji. In Rv 3:21, the one who overcomes Satan and his Nicolaitans will sit on the throne of God and of Jesus. Thus, the location of the one who overcomes is the throne of God and of Jesus. And conversely, God, Jesus, the word of life, the ability to be born again, heaven, and eternal life are not present in any place that does not have the promised one who overcomes. Consequently, this one who overcomes that is

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promised in the New Testament is the person whom all believers of Jesus must find.

When Rv 22:1-2 mentions the tree of life on each side of the river, it is referring to those who are born again of God's word, which is likened unto a seed (Lk 8:11; Jn 1:1-4; Mt 13:31-32). According to Jn 15:1-8, the branches of the tree of life refer to the twelve disciples (i.e., the twelve tribes), and the twelve kinds of fruit refer to believers who are evangelized and led to the twelve tribes by the twelve disciples. The firstfruits of the twelve tribes, the 144,000 people, are also the fruit of the tree of life mentioned in Rv 22:1-2. The leaves of the tree of life that heal all nations are the evangelists who spread the word of the water of life. All nations must be healed because the devil has been twisting the entire world into his own likeness ever since Adam sinned. The angel locked up the devil in the abyss in Rv 20:3 to prevent the devil from deceiving the nations anymore.

Shincheonji, which is organized just like the holy city in the spiritual realm, has been born again (1 Pt 1:23) by the seed of the word (Lk 8:11) and has become the tree of life. It has created its twelve branches (the twelve tribes) and is bearing twelve kinds of fruit every month. God's will is being fulfilled here on earth just as it has been fulfilled in heaven. God's kingdom in the spiritual realm descends upon the earth and unites with the place where God's will has been accomplished. The servants dwelling in this holy city see God's face, serve him, and reign as kings forever and ever (Rv 22:3-5).

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In Moses' time, when the Israelites came out of Egypt and made a covenant with God in the desert surrounding Mt. Sinai, they said to Moses, "You speak to us and we will listen, but do not let God speak with us, lest we die," (Ex 20:19). They said this because they could not bear God speaking to them. They were afraid of dealing directly with God.

At the time of Lord's second coming, however, those who are born again and sealed by God's name and Jesus' name become a new creation. Unlike the generations before them, they will see God's face and serve him.

The angel testified that God sent him to show God's servants what must soon take place. Jesus also said, "I am coming soon! Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy expressed in this book," (Rv 22:6-7). These are the same words that John recorded in Rv 1:1-3. Just as God's messengers were ascending and descending on Jesus to attend to him (Mt 4:11; Jn 1:51), the angels have shown and explained to John the events of the end of the age.

As John throws himself down to worship at the feet of the angel, the angel says to him, "Do not do this! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers the prophets, and with those who obey the words of this book. Worship God," (Rv 22:8-9). He also says, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy contained in this book, because the time is near," (Rv 22:10).

The mission of John is critically important. Only John receives the scroll opened by Jesus (Rv 10). Only John sees all the events of the book of Revelation and receives their explanation. John must

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teach the words he has received and testify about the events that he has seen (Rv 10:11). In other words, all believers must listen to John's explanation concerning the truth about the words and events of Revelation.

Jesus said, "The evildoer must continue to do evil, and the one who is morally filthy must continue to be filthy. The one who is righteous must continue to act righteously, and the one who is holy must continue to be holy. Look! I am coming soon, and my reward is with me to pay each one according to what he has done!" (Rv 22:11-12). There is, thus, a time when all believers must take responsibility for their own actions. Anyone who wants to avoid going to hell should obey the words of God and Jesus.

Revelation 22:14 says that those who wash their robes have access to the tree of life and can enter the city by the gates. Their robes represent the clothing of their hearts. Our spiritual clothing can only be cleansed through the words of the water of life flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb. When the clothing of our hearts is washed, it represents our righteous acts (Rv 19:8; Jn 15:3). Believers who have been cleansed by the words enter the holy city through the twelve apostles, who are represented by gates (Rv 21:14). When Rv 21 is being fulfilled, the holy city in the spiritual realm will have already come down to the earth, and those who participate in the first resurrection will reign as kings with Jesus for 1,000 years in the city of the millennium.

Since the holy city is where God dwells, no evildoers, including the dogs, are allowed to enter (Rv 22:15). These dogs, which

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refer to all pastors who lack understanding, include the pastors who have betrayed and destroyed God's chosen people (Is 56:9-12; 2 Pt 2:20-22).

Jesus has sent his messenger, an angel, to testify about all the events of the book of Revelation to the churches (Rv 22:16). John, along with the angel, has become Jesus' messenger here on Earth and has testified about all the events of the book of Revelation to the churches. Since John has eaten the scroll that Jesus opened, he has seen all the events of the book of Revelation. Since he has received the command from heaven, all churches must listen to and believe the words of John in order to act according to God's will.

John, who was one of Jesus' twelve apostles, received the revelation in a vision and recorded what would take place in the future. When the book of Revelation is fulfilled, however, someone like Apostle John—someone who speaks on behalf of Jesus—appears and sees the actual physical fulfillment that is revealed so that he can testify about it. When he testifies about what he has seen and heard, those who acknowledge his testimony as the truth become God's people on whom God puts his seal.

"The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' And let the one who hears say: 'Come!' And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wants it take the water of life free of charge," (Rv 22:17). Here, the spirit refers to Jesus, who has become the groom. The bride refers to Apostle John, who has received the word by revelation from Jesus and is testifying to it on Jesus' behalf.

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According to Rv 22:17, it is not possible for the water of life to flow from a place that charges money to teach the Bible. The water of life does not flow from those who ask for money before anointing someone, nor does the water of life flow from those who pay money to receive an anointing. Those kinds of people, however, are persecuting Zion Mission Center even though it teaches the word free of charge according to the Bible. Does this not provide plenty of evidence that these persecutors are not pastors who belong to God? People who persecute lack the holy spirit and God's grace. They do not deliver the gospel without cost like Jesus did.

The lecturers at Shincheonji's Zion Mission Centers, who volunteer without cost, are good shepherds like Jesus; they are not hired hands. Believers must discern who is practicing God's word according to the Bible. Shincheonji runs a number of education centers and theological seminaries, but it has never collected tuition from the students. How would this have been possible if not by the power and grace of God?

It is written, "I testify to the one who hears the words of the prophecy contained in this book: If anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book. And if anyone takes away from the words of this book of prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city that are described in this book," (Rv 22:18-19). Jesus, who has testified to these things, also said that he is coming soon (Rv 22:20). I hope that all believers will be able to judge for themselves before God and the Bible. How can someone obey what is recorded in the Bible

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if they do not even know the contents of the book of Revelation? Furthermore, can this type of person really be considered to be a part of an orthodox group that has mastered the Bible?

The testimony contained in this book is true. Until now, no one in the world has ever seen or received this testimony. Until Jesus opened the sealed scroll, no one was able to break the seals and look inside. For this reason, all the pastors and their congregation members in the world have been giving and receiving only the teachings of men. Today, at the appointed time, Jesus took the scroll, opened it, and through the angel (the holy spirit), gave it to the one who overcomes of Shincheonji. He then told him to testify about the prophecies of this book and their physical fulfillment. The pastor of salvation, whom Jesus has promised in the New Testament, is the person who fights and overcomes the enemy prophesied in Revelation. God's kingdom descends upon him.

I am testifying that the prophecies in the New Testament regarding the Lord's second coming have been fulfilled and that the pastor (i.e., the one who overcomes) promised by Jesus is in Shincheonji. I pray that all believers who read this book, *The Creation of Heaven and Earth,* will be born again in order to become the people of Shincheonji, the holy city of heaven.

The conclusion of the entire book of Revelation

The book of Revelation, which was recorded by Apostle John, is a description of future events. John wrote down what he saw

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and heard in visions that he had in the spiritual realm. The conclusion of the entire book is recorded at its beginning in Rv 1:1-8. The events of "what must soon take place," which God will show his servants, are all the events of the book of Revelation. The revelation is conveyed in the following order: God to Jesus, Jesus to the angel, the angel to John, and John to the servants. The one who reads the words of this prophecy aloud, and those who hear and obey the things written in it are blessed. They receive God's seal and become God's kingdom and priests (Rv 7; Jn 3:5, 31-34). Jesus, who comes on the clouds, will come to those who see and believe in the prophecies of Revelation along with their physical fulfillment and who obey what is recorded in the book. He will come to them make his home with them.

The book of Revelation testifies about those who belong to God and those who belong to Satan. It also testifies about how the prophesied events have been fulfilled in the physical world—the actual circumstances by which they took place and the actual identities of the characters involved. Furthermore, it proclaims the promised pastor, the one who overcomes. The events of the book of Revelation can be summarized into one phrase: Revelation is about battles between God and Satan. Those who are victorious receive everything; those who are defeated have everything taken away.

Believers study the Bible to find the true God and the one sent by God so they can attain eternal life (Jn 5:39, 17:3). They also want to understand which pastors belong to the devil to avoid being deceived. In Revelation, God has separated and revealed who

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belongs to God and who belongs to Satan. He has also revealed the outcomes for those who overcome and for those who are defeated.

I, like Apostle John, have seen and heard the revelation of heaven (Rv 10) and its actual physical fulfillment. I have testified about it in response to a command from heaven. Those who believe and obey become God's kingdom and priests; they are blessed by becoming the people of heaven.

Since the sin of Adam, God, the creator of heaven and earth, has been working for 6,000 years to restore humanity. This problem is finally resolved after 6,000 years of work when the book of Revelation is fulfilled. God left people because of their sin, but the fact that the problem of sin was resolved when Jesus bore the cross has been preached to the world for 2,000 years. Today, Jesus comes again, captures Satan, and locks him up. He accomplishes the restoration of God's kingdom—the work of the Alpha and Omega. All the people of the world become the people of heaven as they receive and believe in the physical fulfillment of Revelation testified by the messenger Jesus sends to speak to the churches on his behalf.

Those who believe become God's kingdom, priests, and people, and live in the paradise of God's kingdom forever. May this blessing be given to all people who believe in the Lord, who has come to Shincheonji Church of Jesus.

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Part 4

A Collection of Topical Essays

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[1]Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and earth had ceased to exist, and the sea existed no more. [2]And I saw the holy city – the new Jerusalem – descending out of heaven from God, made ready like a bride adorned for her husband. [3]And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying: "Look! The residence of God is among human beings. He will live among them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them." (Rv 21:1-3)

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1. Creation of heaven and earth: the spiritual and physical worlds

[Ref.: Gn 1; Is 14:12-15; Ez 28:1-19; Jude 1:6, 11, 17-19; 2 Thes 2:4; Rv 9:13-19; Mt 13:36-43; Jn 3:31-34]

When considering the creation of heaven and earth, it is important to note that the Bible refers to two kinds of spirits and two kinds of flesh.

The one and only God created both the spiritual and physical realms within our vast universe; he created heaven and earth (Gn 1:1). Since two kinds of spirits appeared in the spiritual world created by God, two kinds of flesh appeared in the physical world. The two kinds of spirits in the spiritual world are the spirit of God and the spirit of Satan, who was the angel that sinned. Satan appeared in the spiritual world God created when an angel became arrogant and wanted to become God. As a result, he failed to maintain his position of authority, and he abandoned his home to create his own sect (Is 14:12-15; Ez 28:1-19; Jude 1:6, 11, 17-19; 2 Thes 2:4; Rv 9:13-19). Since that time, all spirits have been divided into holy spirits and evil spirits.

God formed flesh out of the ground and planted it with the seed of his spirit, which is the breath of life. When the flesh dies, the spirit that was sown goes to the spiritual realm. There are, however, two kinds of spiritual seed. If the seed of the spirit that was sown

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is God's seed, it goes to God; if it is Satan's seed, it goes to Satan. This spiritual seed is the word of the spirit, and the field where the spiritual seed is sown represents a person's heart (1 Cor 3:9). Roughly 2,000 years ago, Jesus sowed good seed in his field, the Christian church (Mt 13:24-27). The devil, however, sowed his own seed in that same field. These two kinds of seed were allowed to grow together until the time of the harvest. The good seed stands for the sons of the kingdom, and the weeds are the sons of the evil one. The enemy who sowed the weeds is the devil (Mt 13:28-39). Receiving the teachings of men (i.e., the word of the world) is receiving Satan's seed. Receiving God's words of revelation, on the other hand, is receiving God's seed (Jn 3:31-34). Therefore, believers must now judge for themselves whose seed they are receiving by considering the prophecies and the physical fulfillment of the book of Revelation.

God has chosen one pastor to speak and act on his behalf. God has given this chosen pastor his seed, which the pastor sows into people's hearts. God is the groom because he gives the seed. The chosen pastor is the bride because he receives the seed from the groom and uses it to give birth to sons. These sons are believers born of God's bride, which makes them the sons of God. Likewise, Satan also chooses a pastor to speak and act on his behalf. That pastor becomes Satan's bride, receives Satan's seed, and gives birth to Satan's children. The Bible reveals these two entities to us. Believers study the scriptures in order to know the only true God and the one sent by God in the first and the second comings (Jn 5:39, 17:3).

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We also study in order to know Satan's true identity. It is only when we know Satan's true identity that we can avoid being deceived. At the time of the second coming, just like the time of the first coming, there are very few people in the world with true faith (Lk 18:8). This is why a few remnant seed are selected from the world of the previous heaven, and through them, the world of the new heaven is created again.

The figure on the next page should help clarify the work of God and Satan.

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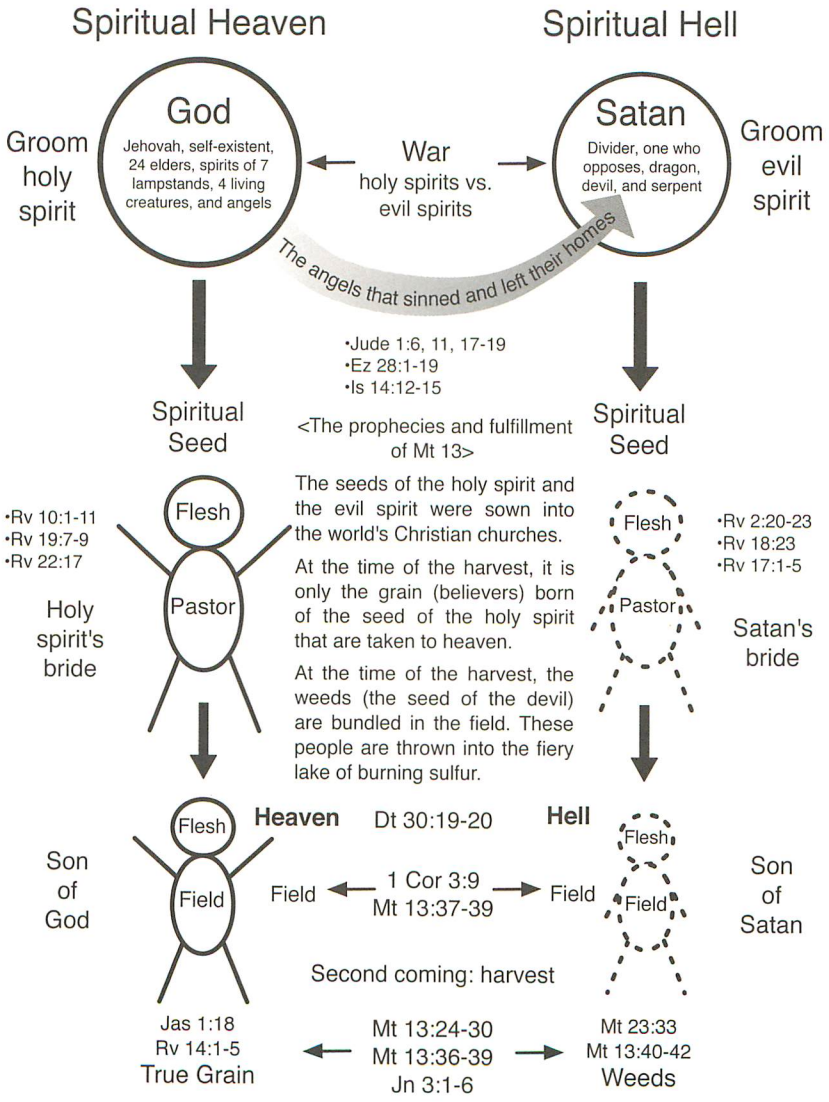
Two kinds of spirits, pastors, and believers

God, the creator of everything, did not actually create Satan. One of the cherubim (i.e., archangels) that God created betrayed God because he wanted to rise up and take God's place. He formed his own sect, opposed God, and became Satan.



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2. The reason Jesus spoke in figurative language

[Ref.: Mt 13:10-13, 34-35; Mk 4:34; Ps 78:1-3]

Why did Jesus use figurative language when he talked about the secrets of the kingdom of heaven? Jesus did not speak about any of the secrets of heaven without using a parable (Ps 78:1-3; Mt 13:34-35). Let us consider why Jesus spoke about the secrets of the kingdom of heaven in figurative language.

Many people think that Jesus spoke in parables to make his points more easily understood. There are, of course, situations where this kind of reasoning applies. For example, Jesus said, "Why do you see the speck in your brother's eye, but fail to see the beam of wood in your own?" (Mt 7:3). The speck refers to another person's insignificant faults, and the beam of wood refers to our own more serious deficiencies. This is an example where a parable is used to aid understanding.

The parables regarding the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, however, are very different from the above example. In Mt 13:10, the disciples asked Jesus, "Why do you speak to them in parables?" Jesus replied to them in the passage that follows:

- [11]He replied, "You have been given the opportunity to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but they have not. [12]For whoever has will be given more, and will have an abundance. But whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. [13]For this reason I speak to

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> them in parables: Although they see they do not see, and although they hear they do not hear nor do they understand." (Mt 13:11-13)

According to the verses above, some people are allowed to know the secrets of heaven, while others are not. At the time of the first coming, the disciples were allowed to know the secrets of heaven, but the people Satan was using—the Pharisees and teachers of the law—were not allowed to understand. Hence, Jesus spoke in parables so that the secrets of heaven would be hidden from those who were not permitted to know.

Most believers probably think that it would be good for everyone to know the secrets of heaven. They might wonder whether it was really necessary to hide these secrets. These are simply man's thoughts. God's thoughts are very different.

We tell our secrets only to people we can trust; we do not share them with everyone. For example, if a soldier passes on a secret to the enemy during a war, it will inevitably lead to negative consequences. Codes are used in the military to prevent secrets from being revealed. This is why Jesus spoke the secrets of heaven in parables. The secrets of heaven must not be revealed to people who belong to Satan; only God's children should know.

If the secrets of God are made known to people that belong to Satan, Satan will use that information to hinder God's work. Since Jesus knew this, he spoke figuratively to hide the secrets of heaven from Satan's group. Today is the time when we must know the reality of the figurative language. This is something that all Shincheonji people must consider. Now, as we begin the new

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generation, people who have left us to become antichrists, along with the people they deceived, have taken the secrets of heaven and used them to interfere with our work. What they have taken, however, was just the outer surface of the secrets—things we have already fulfilled. They can do nothing but plagiarize these secrets. Their actions reveal their true identities as antichrists.

It is not that the entire Bible is recorded in figurative language, nor did Jesus speak everything in figurative language. Jesus spoke about the secrets of heaven figuratively because there are people who are allowed to know them and people who are not allowed. Those who are allowed to know the secrets of heaven will be able to understand the secrets of heaven hidden in the figurative language. Those who are not allowed will not understand the meaning of the secrets no matter how many times they read them or how much they hear them explained. In Mt 13, these two groups of people are classified as "you" and "them" (Mt 13:10-16).

Did Jesus' disciples understand from the beginning when Jesus spoke about the secrets of heaven? No, they did not. Even the disciples could not understand the meaning until Jesus explained the parables. Jesus spoke about the secrets of heaven in figurative language when a large crowd was gathered in a public place, but Jesus explained the parables when he was alone with his disciples (Mk 4:34). He did this because there were people who belonged to Satan among the large crowd—people who were not allowed to know the secrets of heaven.

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- He did not speak to them without a parable. But privately he explained everything to his own disciples. (Mk 4:34)

In Mt 13:36, the disciples asked Jesus to explain the parables he had spoken to the crowd. He complied so that the disciples would be able to understand the secrets of heaven. We too, like the disciples, must listen to Jesus' explanation in order to understand the secrets of heaven.

Jesus told the following parable about heaven: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches," (Mt 13:31-32, NIV). What does the seed represent in this parable? What is the field where the seed is sown? What does it mean that the seed grows into a tree? What are the birds that come and nest in the tree?

Jesus again said, "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed with three measures of flour until all the dough had risen," (Mt 13:33). What does this yeast represent? What does it mean for the yeast to make the dough rise? Who is the woman with the yeast? We must know all of these parables.

One thing must be mentioned about the yeast. There are two kinds of yeast: the yeast of the truth, which represents God's teaching, and the yeast of the lies, which represents Satan's teaching. The yeast in Mt 13:33 that relates to the secrets of heaven is the yeast of the truth, but the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees in Mt 16:6 is the yeast of lies.

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❖ 6"Watch out," Jesus said to them, "beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees." ... 11"How could you not understand that I was not speaking to you about bread? But beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees!" 12Then they understood that he had not told them to be on guard against the yeast in bread, but against the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees. (Mt 16:6-12)

All the answers for the secrets of heaven—the secrets that were spoken in parables—are hidden in the Bible. Jesus promised that a time was coming when he would no longer speak figuratively, but would speak plainly about the Father (Jn 16:25).

We at Shincheonji, as is promised in the Bible, have explained the figurative language plainly and have been testifying about the physical fulfillment of the prophecies. It is by hearing this explanation and testimony, that Christians can become Jesus' true disciples who understand the secrets of heaven. May all believers understand the secrets of heaven and enter God's kingdom.

3. The parable of sowing two kinds of seed

[Ref.: Mt 13:1-43; Mk 4:1-20; Lk 8:4-15]

What do the two kinds of seed in the parable of sowing the seed represent in reality (Mt 13:24-30)? Where are these seed sown? In this parable, the good seed is the word of God (Lk 8:11) and it is sown in the hearts of men (1 Cor 3:9).

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The parable of sowing the seed is the first parable people should learn from among the parables of heaven that Jesus gave us. This was made clear when Jesus said, "Don't you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable?" (Mk 4:13). No one can understand the other parables of heaven without first understanding the parable of sowing the seed.

Let us first learn about the characteristics of the seed in order to understand the parable of sowing that seed.

All living creatures are born of a "seed." These living creatures possess that seed and multiply through that seed. Although there are many different kinds of physical seed in the world, there are only two kinds of spiritual seed in the Bible—the seed of God and the seed of Satan. Jesus compared the word of God, which gives life to our spirits, to a seed (Lk 8:11). Peter said that we are born again through the imperishable seed, which is the living and enduring word of God (1 Pt 1:23).

✥ Now the parable means this: The seed is the word of God. (Lk 8:11)

How does the Bible express the difference between these two kinds of seed?

Approximately 2,600 years ago, God prophesied through the prophet Jeremiah that the day was coming when he would plant the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and the seed of beast (Jer 31:27, NKJV). This prophecy was fulfilled roughly 600 years later in Jesus' first coming (Mt 13:24-25).

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- "Behold, the days are coming," says the LORD, "that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and the seed of beast." (Jer 31:27, NKJV)

- [24]Jesus told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. [25]But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away." (Mt 13:24-25, NIV)

Jesus told a parable in Mt 13:24: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field." Is this man just going to sow the good seed and forget about it? No, of course not. If there is a time to sow the seed, there is also a time for it to be harvested. In the meantime, according to verse 25, an enemy comes and sows weeds among the wheat before going away. The two kinds of seed are sown in the same place. What, then, are the good seed and the weeds? Who is the man who sowed the good seed and who is the enemy who sowed the weeds?

The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man, which is Jesus (Mt 13:37). Therefore, among the two kinds of seed promised in Jer 31:27, the good seed that Jesus sowed was the seed of man. The good seed are people born of the word of God. They become children of God—sons of heaven (Mt 13:38).

- [37]He answered, "The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. [38]The field is the world and the good seed are the people of the kingdom. The weeds are the people of the evil one." (Mt 13:37-38)

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If that is the case, what are the weeds and who is the enemy who sowed them? Since the enemy who sowed the weeds is the devil (Mt 13:39), the weeds are the seed of the devil. Revelation figuratively calls Satan the devil, the dragon, and the ancient serpent (Rv 20:2). This is why the weeds Satan sowed are called the seed of beasts (Jer 31:27). The seed that Satan sowed are his words.

✥ "And the enemy who sows them is the devil." (Mt 13:39)

Just as God sowed his seed through Jesus, Satan also uses his own pastor to sow his own seed. Anyone born of the seed of Satan becomes a child of Satan—a son of the evil one. There is a Korean proverb that says, "If you sow soybeans, soybeans grow, and if you sow red beans, red beans grow." In the same way, those born of the seed of God become sons of heaven (children of God), but those born of Satan's seed become sons of the evil one (children of Satan) (Mt 13:38-39).

The children of Satan, born of Satan's seed, can never enter the kingdom of heaven. The children of God, born of God's seed, are the only ones allowed to enter the kingdom of heaven. Jesus stated this explicitly when he said that no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and spirit (Jn 3:5).

Who do children resemble? Of course, children resemble their parents. People born of God's seed resemble God in his image and nature, but people born of Satan's seed instead resemble Satan in image and thought. For this reason, it is easy to distinguish the seed with which a person was born by looking at their words and actions. Those who are born from God have the seed of God inside

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them (1 Jn 3:9). We must have this seed—the word of God—in our hearts to become children who resemble God. If we have previously received Satan's seed in our hearts (i.e., our field), we end up with two kinds of seed when we receive God's word. We will then produce the fruit of good and evil, which makes us the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. As a result, we too, can be like Satan, who left his position of authority in God's house, created a sect, and went against his creator (Jude 1:6, 18-19; 2 Pt 2:1). This is why we must carefully examine our actions so we can discern whether we are a child of God or a child of Satan.

Now, let's learn about the field in which the seed of God and the seed of Satan are sown. Seed are sown in fields. The word is sown in people's hearts. Thus, it is the seed of the word that is sown in the field of people's hearts (1 Cor 3:9, 16). There are four different types of fields in which the seed of the word of God can be sown (Mt 13:18-23; Mk 4:15-20). These four different fields represent four different kinds of hearts that are trying to accept the word of God. Let's take a look at the four types of fields one by one.

First, let us look at the field like a path.

- These are the ones on the path where the word is sown: Whenever they hear, immediately Satan comes and snatches the word that was sown in them. (Mk 4:15)

The field like a path represents people who hear the word of God without understanding it. When the birds come and eat the seed sown on the path, it means that although these people hear the word of God, the devil comes and immediately snatches away

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the word that was sown in them. This is why they cannot perceive the true meaning of God's word (Mt 13:19; Mk 4:15). Although the word (seed) was received, it was taken away. The end result is a field without the seed. This field returns to its original condition of emptiness. Therefore, everyone who listens to the message about the kingdom should pray that their heart understands so that the word is not taken away by the devil.

Second, let us look at the rocky field.

❖ [16]These are the ones sown on rocky ground: As soon as they hear the word, they receive it with joy. [17]But they have no root in themselves and do not endure. Then, when trouble or persecution comes because of the word, immediately they fall away. (Mk 4:16-17)

We should realize that trouble and persecution comes for a very specific reason; it comes because of the word. We should remember that Satan tries in every way he can to prevent the message of the kingdom of heaven that is planted in our hearts from taking root. People often thoughtlessly criticize the place that teaches the word by calling it a cult. They persecute instead of carefully examining the word for themselves. They see no reason to learn the word if they faithfully attend church services. The devil works through the people close to us in every way he can. His goal is to discourage people who are trying to walk toward the word of heaven. Let us examine the time of Jesus' first coming as an example. The Jewish people, who assumed they had strong faith in God, excommunicated anyone and everyone they could find who acknowledged Jesus Christ (Jn 9:22). Even Apostle Paul was criticized and referred to

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as a troublemaker and a ringleader of a Nazarene sect (Acts 24:5). It is clear that there was also serious trouble and extreme persecution 2,000 years ago because of the word.

Jesus did, however, say, "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness," (Mt 5:10-12). After receiving the message of the kingdom of heaven, trouble, persecution, and temptation will surely come. True believers should neither fall nor be discouraged. Instead, they should be patient and overcome through prayer and the word of God. This is the way to bear the fruit of faith.

Third, let us look at the thorny field.

❖ [18]Others are the ones sown among thorns: They are those who hear the word, [19]but worldly cares, the seductiveness of wealth, and the desire for other things come in and choke the word, and it produces nothing. (Mk 4:18-19)

What is the point of having all the wealth and prosperity in the world if you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven and instead receive eternal punishment in hell? People should not allow the worries of this life or the deceitfulness of wealth to hide from them the enslavement of their souls. We should, instead, be God's children and glorify God by bearing fruit according to the amount of word we have received.

Fourth, let us look at the good soil.

❖ But as for the seed that landed on good soil, these are the ones who, after hearing the word, cling to it with an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with steadfast endurance. (Lk 8:15)

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- But as for the seed sown on good soil, this is the person who hears the word and understands. He bears fruit, yielding a hundred, sixty, or thirty times what was sown. (Mt 13:23)

The seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering, produce a crop (Lk 8:15). This type of person produces a crop a hundred, sixty, or thirty times what was sown (Mt 13:33; Mk 4:20). Producing a crop refers to the bearing of fruit that ripens and matures to perfection. In general, "fruit" can refer either to the fruit of plants or to a person's children. Let us look at the various meanings of fruit in the Bible. According to Gal 5:22-23, the fruit of the spirit is seen through our hearts and actions. Proverbs 12:14 mentions the fruit of the lips, and Jas 1:18 refers to the fruit of evangelism. God, who planted his promised seed in people's hearts, will harvest those who have become fruit (also referred to as wheat) at the time of harvest. It is not that the spirit can be harvested alone, leaving its physical body behind. The harvest will encompass both the spirit and flesh, which together have become a new creation through the word of God.

All believers should pray to ensure that they have only God's seed (i.e., God's word) planted in their hearts and not Satan's seed. Moreover, despite any trouble that may come, people must have a noble and good heart that hears the word, retains it, and by persevering, produces a crop.

Roughly 2,000 years ago, Jesus planted the gospel of the kingdom of heaven in his field—the church of Jesus Christ. Just as God

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prophesied through the prophet Jeremiah, two kinds of seed were sown in this field (Jer 31:27; Mt 13:24-30). At the time of harvest, only those born of the good seed—the wheat-like believers—will be harvested into the barn of God. The weeds will be left behind and thrown into the fiery furnace of hell.

During the time of the first coming, God sent his son Jesus to the people of Jerusalem. God had united with Jesus, but the Pharisees and Sadducees, who were the religious leaders at that time, refused to accept Jesus as the Christ. Not only did they refuse to accept Jesus, they also blocked the way for people who were earnestly seeking God (heaven) (Mt 23:13). In other words, although the pastors of Physical Israel in Jerusalem received the teachings of God at the time of the first coming (Jn 6:45), they still blocked people from going to God. Since Jesus was the one conveying God's word, preventing people from going to learn from Jesus, was preventing them from going to God. Jesus, who knew this, said that he would come stealthily, like a thief in the night, to harvest his crops at the time of the second coming (Mt 24:40-43). People who know the true meaning of the Bible at that time will be alert and self-controlled. They will believe and be saved (2 Thes 5:1-6; Jn 4:36).

Approximately 2,000 years since the seed was sown, this promised harvest is being fulfilled in Shincheonji today.

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4. The secrets of heaven and the two kinds of seed

[Ref.: Mt 13; Rv 14:1-5, 14-20]

What are the two kinds of seed?

There are many kinds of seed in the world, but there are only two kinds of spiritual seed: the seed of God, and the seed of Satan. Spiritual seed are the words of a spirit (Lk 8:11). The field where the spiritual seed is sown represents a person's heart (1 Cor 3:9).

People become either sons of God or sons of Satan depending on which of the two kinds of seed they receive (Mt 13:36-39). A son born of the seed of his father will have the image of his father because the image is in the seed. At the first coming, when Jesus was talking about the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, the first thing he mentioned was the parable of sowing the seed. This was when the disciples asked Jesus why he spoke to people in parables.

Why did Jesus speak about the secrets of heaven in parables? Let us find out the reason in the verses that follow:

- I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter hidden things, things from of old. (Ps 78:2, NIV)

- [34]Jesus spoke all these things in parables to the crowds; he did not speak to them without a parable. [35]This fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet: "I will open my mouth in parables, I will announce what has been hidden from the foundation of the world." (Mt 13:34-35)

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- [10]Then the disciples came to him and said, "Why do you speak to them in parables?" [11]He replied, "You have been given the opportunity to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but they have not." (Mt 13:10-11)

- [10]When he was alone, those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables. [11]He said to them, "The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those outside, everything is in parables, [12]so that although they look they may look but not see, and although they hear they may hear but not understand, so they may not repent and be forgiven." (Mk 4:10-12)

There are two reasons Jesus spoke to people in parables. First, he had to fulfill the prophecy written in Ps 78:2 (Mt 13:34-35). Second, he had to hide the secrets of the kingdom of heaven from people who were not allowed to know them (Mt 13:10-11; Mk 4:10-12). If people like the Pharisees and Sadducees, who belonged to Satan, were to learn the secrets of heaven, they would interfere with God's plan. Jesus spoke in parables about the secrets of heaven to the members of Satan's army. This prevented them from understanding the secrets of heaven despite both seeing and hearing them. Jesus did, however, plainly explain the parables to his disciples because they were his allies as members of heaven's army.

Jesus told another parable about the kingdom of heaven when he said that heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. When the mustard seed grows, it becomes a

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tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches (Mt 13:31-32).

✥ 31He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. 32Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches." (Mt 13:31-32, NIV)

What is this seed that grows into heaven? According to Jn 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was fully God." Since God is the word, God's son Jesus is also the word. What, then, is the relationship between the word and the seed?

According to Jn 3:6, flesh gives birth to flesh, but spirit gives birth to spirit. Since God is spirit, God's seed is not of this world; it is spiritual. Since we know that God gave birth to us through the word of truth (Jas 1:18), it is clear that the seed of God is his word (Lk 8:11). The Bible also says that the field where the seed is sown represents a person's heart (1 Cor 3:9).

A Korean proverb says, "If you sow soybeans, soybeans grow, and if you sow red beans, red beans grow." In the same way, anyone who is born of God's seed will be a child of God. People who are born of God's seed must have the image of God, being like God in character. These people will enter the kingdom of God because they are children of God.

There is a problem, however, because God's seed is not the only type of seed. Satan's seed, which is his word, also exists.

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Anyone born of the seed of Satan will become a child of Satan and will go to hell. It is a lie to say people who have not been born of the seed of God will enter the kingdom of God. Just calling Jesus "Lord" does not make you a child of God, nor does it make you a citizen of heaven (Mt 7:21). All believers should confirm which of the two types of seed they have received.

Where was the seed of Satan sown? According to Jesus' parable, "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away," (Mt 13:24-25, NIV). In this parable the good seed is the word of God, and the man who sowed it is Jesus. The field is Jesus' church, and the enemy is the devil. The weeds the enemy sowed represent the words of the devil.

Since the weeds were sown among the wheat, it is clear that the good seed and the weeds are planted in the same field. This tells us that the word of God is mixed with the word of Satan within the churches of Jesus. Again, Satan's word has been sown in the church. Since the Bible testifies that the teachings of Satan have been sown in the church, the true children of God must use their judgment to distinguish between the two (Heb 5:14; 1 Jn 5:20).

The two kinds of seed that were sown each grow to become trees that bear fruit. The holy spirit will perch like a dove on the tree that grows from the seed of God, but an evil spirit will perch on the tree that grows from the seed of Satan (Mt 3:16, 13:32, 25, 38-39).

What, then, are the wheat and the weeds?

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The true grain (wheat) refer to true believers who are born again of the word of God. The weeds are church congregation members who are born of the word of Satan. The fruit that ripen on the tree that grows from the seed of God also represent believers born of the word of truth (1 Pt 1:23; Jas 1:18; Mt 13:38).

- You have been born anew, not from perishable but from imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God. (1 Pt 1:23)

- By his sovereign plan he gave us birth through the message of truth, that we would be a kind of firstfruits of all he created. (Jas 1:18)

- The field is the world and the good seed are the people of the kingdom. The weeds are the people of the evil one. (Mt 13:38)

Which of these two groups of church goers will the angels harvest when the time comes? Certainly it will be the wheat-like believers, born of the word of God, who are harvested (Mt 13:30; Rv 14:14-16). The children of Satan (the weeds) will be left behind in their churches. At the time of Jesus' first coming, the Pharisees and Sadducees prevented people from going to Jesus, who was testifying the gospel of heaven (the physical fulfillment of the Old Testament). Even today, at the time of the second coming, pastors are preventing people from moving toward the one testifying the physical fulfillment of the New Testament. These pastors accomplish their goals by calling the promised pastor a cult leader. Today, at the time of the harvest, people in the field of Jesus (the churches of Jesus) must be harvested in order to receive salvation.

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Where is the barn of God where the wheat-like believers are harvested and gathered? The barn of God is Mt. Zion, where both God and Jesus dwell. According to Rv 14:1-5, the 144,000 firstfruits of God are standing on Mt. Zion before the throne of God and Jesus the Lamb. Mount Zion is a spiritual place that symbolizes the tabernacle of the chosen people; it symbolizes the location of the twelve tribes who have received God's seal.

The 144,000 gathered at Mt. Zion sing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the 24 elders. According to Rv 14:3, no one can learn the new song except the 144,000. This new song is, therefore, evidence that verifies the identity of Mt. Zion. The new song is the word of testimony that proclaims the opened book of Rv 10 and the fulfillment of all the prophecies.

The content above can be briefly summarized: The seed of God is God's word and the seed of the devil is the devil's word. Those who are born of the seed of God become his children, but those who are born of the seed of the devil become children of the devil. Those born of God's seed (i.e., the wheat-like believers) will be harvested into the barn of heaven. The barn of heaven is Mt. Zion where God's people sing the new song. On the other hand, anyone who is not harvested at the time of the harvest has proven they belong to the weeds, which are born of the devil's seed. Those who persecute the people that are harvested also prove that they belong to the evil one (Mt 5:10-12).

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Roughly 2,600 years ago, God prophesied through Jeremiah that, in the days to come, he would plant the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and the seed of beast. Approximately 600 years after this prophecy was made, Jesus came to plant the seed of man. It was the Pharisees, however, who planted the seed of the beast among the seed of man in the church of Christ. This is how Jeremiah's prophecy was fulfilled.

Jesus prophesied that he would come back to harvest the field where he had sown the seed. This prophecy is finding its fulfillment today after 2,000 years. I hope that everyone will come and verify whether this is true. People who believe it will reach salvation.

5. The reason we must know the Bible

[Ref.: Rv 10; 2 Thes 2:1-12; Mt 24:3-31; Rv 14:8-11; 2 Pt 2:20-22]

Why should we know the Bible? What is it the word of God is trying to convey to us?

There are two main reasons believers should read the Bible. The first is that we must know the true God, Jesus, and the promised pastor (Jn 5:39, 17:3; Rv 10). God and Jesus come to and unite with the promised pastor. They speak through him, and give blessings through him. They dwell together with him (Rv 2-3). This is similar to the way God chose and worked through both Moses and Jesus (Jn 5:17-19). During the time of his first coming, Jesus shined the

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light of truth into the darkness, but ignorant people, because they lacked understanding, refused to accept him as Lord (Jn 1:1-11). This is why Jesus said that the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Mt 8:11-12). Just think about how much these people must have prayed, served, worked, and waited daily to go to heaven.

Nevertheless, they are unable to attain the object of their hope. Jesus questioned whether or not he would find faith on the earth when he returns (Lk 18:8). This is a prophecy that the condition of humanity in the time of the second coming will be the same as that of the first coming. Everyone should realize that the people who appear at the tabernacle (viz. the holy place of Mt 24 and the tabernacle of heaven in Rv 13) and the things they do there are the physical fulfillment of the prophecies. A person can see the truth, but without understanding and believing it, there is no salvation. People without salvation will be thrown out of the house of God.

- You study the scriptures thoroughly because you think in them you possess eternal life, and it is these same scriptures that testify about me. (Jn 5:39)

- Now this is eternal life – that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you sent. (Jn 17:3)

- [8]Then the voice I had heard from heaven began to speak to me again, "Go and take the open scroll in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land." [9]So I went to the angel and asked him

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> to give me the little scroll. He said to me, "Take the scroll and eat it. It will make your stomach bitter, but it will be as sweet as honey in your mouth." [10]So I took the little scroll from the angel's hand and ate it, and it did taste as sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it, my stomach became bitter. [11]Then they told me: "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, languages, and kings." (Rv 10:8-11)

The second reason believers must know the Bible is that we must avoid being deceived by Satan. This can be accomplished only by knowing and recognizing the true identity of Satan through the Bible (Rv 14:8-11).

Apostle Paul said that the second coming would not occur until after the betrayal of the chosen people and until the man of lawlessness has been revealed (2 Thes 2:1-3). Jesus comes again after the chosen people—the Christians—betray and are destroyed by gentile pastors (Rv 13). Regarding this point, Mt 24:29-31 says that the Lord will come with his angels after the sun is darkened, the moon no longer gives its light, and the stars fall from the sky. At that time, Jesus and his angels will come and unite with the one who fought against the gentile destroyers and overcame (Rv 12, 15). Together they will harvest the new chosen people and create a new nation (Rv 7, 14). This new nation is composed of the twelve tribes of New Spiritual Israel that are promised in the New Testament (Rv 7, 14; Mt 19:28). Do all believers know this promise from the Bible?

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When asked by his disciples about the signs of his coming and of the end of the age, the first thing Jesus told them was to be careful not to be deceived by man (Mt 24:4-5, 24-25). Jesus said that false christs and false prophets would appear to deceive even the elect if that were possible. The elect mentioned here refer to the chosen people who appear after the events of betrayal and destruction.

Let us find out more about the antichrist who deceives the chosen people (1 Jn 2:18-19). According to the apostles, the antichrists are the people who left them, failing to maintain their positions of authority. These people abandon their homes (Jude 1:6) to create sects (Jude 1:17-19).

✦ [18]Children, it is the last hour, and just as you heard that the antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have appeared. We know from this that it is the last hour. [19]They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us, because if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us. But they went out from us to demonstrate that all of them do not belong to us. (1 Jn 2:18-19)

The appearance of antichrists is related to the appearance of Satan. Satan is the angel who betrayed and failed to maintain his position of authority. He abandoned his home and created a sect in the spiritual kingdom of God. Just as this archangel (the morning star) deceived other angels in God's kingdom to create his own sect, the antichrists deceive the members of God's chosen people whom they were with to create their own sects. The antichrists do this because the spirit of Satan enters them and works through them. Again, antichrists belong to God's people until they choose to

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leave. When they leave they do not work against the world. Instead, they unite with the world to work against their former brothers.

Apostle Peter said that pastors who betray after learning the way of righteousness are like dogs that return to their vomit and sows that go back to wallowing in the mud (2 Pt 2:20-22). God also referred to shepherds who lack understanding as mute dogs. He said, "All you wild animals in the fields, come and devour, all you wild animals in the forest!" (Is 56:9-11). Being devoured by the wild animals of the field and forest is being destroyed.

We cannot associate with the betrayers who have left us to create sects and work against us. Clearly breaking the covenant, trying to kill one's own teacher, leading a coup d'état to steal congregation members, and establishing a sect are all acts of rebellion (Is 14:12-14; Ez 28). When these entities appear and act according to the Bible, everyone should admit that the prophecies have been fulfilled. People must use the Bible to distinguish the identity of the antichrists (1 Jn 2:18-19; Mt 24:24), the dogs and pigs (2 Pt 2:21-22), those compared to beasts, those who betray and create their own sects, and the opponents against whom we must fight (Jude 1:6, 11, 17-19). By looking at the book of Acts and at the epistles, we know that these events that are occurring today also occurred at the time when the apostles were preaching the gospel. Therefore, we should be alert so that after recognizing that these events have occurred, we can distinguish and understand which parts of the Bible have been fulfilled. We must keep the word and become people who attain righteousness.

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We, Shincheonji, are testifying plainly through the Bible about the identity of the betrayers, the destroyers, and the savior who have appeared at the end of the age.

6. The figurative sheep, dog, and beast

[Ref.: Mt 10:16, 25:32-33; 1 Cor 5:7; Is 56:9-12; Prv 30:2-3; Rv 13:1-2, 7]

What are the true identities of the sheep, dogs, and beasts that are used figuratively in the Bible? Sheep represent believers, dogs represent pastors who betray, and a beast is someone who does not know God and his word—a false pastor who devours the sheep.

At the time of his first coming, Jesus spoke about many things using parables. These parables are examples of figurative language that use physical people, places, and things to describe a spiritual reality. When used in prophecies, parables must always point toward a future physical fulfillment.

Let us learn about figurative sheep. Jesus referred to his disciples as sheep, but he called the people who persecute them ravenous wolves that want nothing more than to devour the sheep (Mt 10:16). Jesus also divided believers into two categories, saying that true believers are like sheep, but false believers are like goats (Mt 25:32-33). Even though both the sheep and the goats live and eat together under the care of a single shepherd, their characters are completely different. Neither the wolf-like persecutors nor

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the goat-like false believers, can inherit the kingdom of heaven. Only true sheep-like believers will inherit the kingdom of heaven.

- I am sending you out like sheep surrounded by wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. (Mt 10:16)

- 32All the nations will be assembled before him, and he will separate people one from another like a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. (Mt 25:32-33)

On the other hand, Apostle Paul said that Jesus became our Passover lamb (1 Cor 5:7). While in exile, the descendants of Israel were saved by eating the flesh of the lamb. Apostle Paul compared Jesus to a lamb because Jesus sacrificed his body on the cross for the work of salvation.

- Clean out the old yeast so that you may be a new batch of dough – you are, in fact, without yeast. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. (1 Cor 5:7)

Now, let us learn about figurative dogs. People often decide to raise a dog to protect their homes. This is why a pastor who protects a church and its congregation members is figuratively referred to as a dog. A dog, however, is not just any general pastor. It refers specifically to a pastor who has betrayed (2 Pt 2:20-22) or to a pastor who lacks understanding (Is 56:9-12).

- 20For if after they have escaped the filthy things of the world through the rich knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they again get

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entangled in them and succumb to them, their last state has become worse for them than their first. [21]For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than, having known it, to turn back from the holy commandment that had been delivered to them. [22]They are illustrations of this true proverb: "A dog returns to its own vomit," and "A sow, after washing herself, wallows in the mire." (2 Pt 2:20-22)

✥ [9]All you wild animals in the fields, come and devour, all you wild animals in the forest! [10]All their watchmen are blind, they are unaware. All of them are like mute dogs, unable to bark. They pant, lie down, and love to snooze. [11]The dogs have big appetites; they are never full. They are shepherds who have no understanding; they all go their own way, each one looking for monetary gain. [12]Each one says, "Come on, I'll get some wine! Let's guzzle some beer! Tomorrow will be just like today! We'll have everything we want!" (Is 56:9-12)

According to the verses above, dogs and pigs symbolize pastors who have betrayed and forsaken the faith. A dog eats what he has vomited, and a pig goes back to wallowing in the mud after being washed. People are like dogs and pigs when they learn the word of God, but go back to being their old selves. Moreover, a mute dog is a pastor who, because of his lack of understanding, fails to accomplish the mission to which God appointed him. According to Rv 22:15, the dogs are on the outside, unable to enter the holy city. Dogs also refer to pastors who betray and lack understanding. Jesus said, "Do not give what is holy to dogs or throw your pearls

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before pigs; otherwise they will trample them under their feet and turn around and tear you to pieces," (Mt 7:6).

Next, let us learn about the figurative beast. Although the beasts have very sensitive ears, they can never understand the words of men. For this reason, someone who is ignorant of God and his word can be referred to as a beast (Prv 30:2-3).

According to Rv 13, a beast that has seven heads and ten horns comes out of the sea and receives authority from the dragon. Since the dragon is Satan (Rv 20:2), we know that this beast is someone who receives authority from Satan. The beast resembles a leopard, a bear, and a lion because these animals are destroyers (Rv 13:1-2, 7) who want to harm the sheep-like believers.

✦ [1]Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea. It had ten horns and seven heads, and on its horns were ten diadem crowns, and on its heads a blasphemous name. [2]Now the beast that I saw was like a leopard, but its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. The dragon gave the beast his power, his throne, and great authority to rule. ... [7]The beast was permitted to go to war against the saints and conquer them. He was given ruling authority over every tribe, people, language, and nation. (Rv 13:1-2, 7)

John 10 mentions a wolf that attacks and scatters the sheep. When the hired shepherd, who cares only for riches, sees the wolf coming, he flees, abandoning the sheep because they do not belong to him. He allows the herd of sheep to be devoured by the wolf. Jesus, on the other hand, was a good shepherd, because he laid down his life for the sheep as part of fighting and attaining victory. Just like

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the wolf, the beast of Rv 13 refers to a gentile pastor of Satan who invades God's tabernacle.

✥ 11"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. 12The hired hand, who is not a shepherd and does not own sheep, sees the wolf coming and abandons the sheep and runs away. So the wolf attacks the sheep and scatters them. 13Because he is a hired hand and is not concerned about the sheep, he runs away. 14"I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me – 15just as the Father knows me and I know the Father – and I lay down my life for the sheep. (Jn 10:11-15)

Again, the figurative beast symbolizes both a person who does not know the word and a gentile pastor of Satan who destroys God's people. According to Rv 13, the gentile pastor of Satan enters God's dwelling place (the tabernacle) in heaven and devours its congregation members. In Rv 12, however, the people who fight and overcome the beast that devoured God's people are the ones who begin the work of salvation by establishing the twelve tribes of God's kingdom. Shincheonji testifies about the physical fulfillment of the prophecies of Revelation that have appeared today.

As explained above, a figurative sheep is a believer, a figurative dog is a pastor who betrays or a pastor who lacks understanding, and a figurative beast is a person who does not know the word of God or a pastor of Satan that destroys God's people. All believers should verify whether their pastors are good shepherds who lay down their lives for their sheep, hired hands who abandon their sheep, or beasts—gentile pastors of Satan. Believers must be leery

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of the hired hands and wolf-like gentile pastors. Believers must find the good shepherd, who, like Jesus, lays down his life for the sheep. All believers should then unite with him to attain salvation (Mt 7:7-8).

7. The meaning of the Lord's Prayer

[Ref.: Mt 6:9-13]

To whom do believers pray? What do they seek? How do prayers rise to heaven and how can believers have their prayers answered? When Jesus saw the Pharisees boasting through their prayers, he taught his disciples the correct way to pray (Mt 6:1-13).

Prayer is often considered the breath of a believer; that is how important it is. It is as important as life itself. Apostle Paul said that believers are consecrated through the word and through prayer (1 Tm 4:5).

In Rv 5:8, the four living creatures and the 24 elders surround God's throne. They have harps and golden bowls full of incense; the incense represents the prayers of the saints.

❖ [3]Another angel holding a golden censer came and was stationed at the altar. A large amount of incense was given to him to offer up, with the prayers of all the saints, on the golden altar that is before the throne. [4]The smoke coming from the incense, along with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand. (Rv 8:3-4).

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According to this passage, the prayers of the saints are delivered to God by the angels. When a believer stores God's word of fire in his heart and prays, the angel receives that prayer and delivers it to God.

Since the people of this lowly earth are immersed in sin, the only way the most holy and high God will respond to their prayers is if they pray according to God's word with their whole hearts. Jesus said to his disciples:

- "If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you want, and it will be done for you." (Jn 15:7)

God hears our prayers when we pray in Jesus' name through the word of God, but we must also pray with a sincere heart for the things that we really need (Jn 14:13, 16:26).

- And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. (Jn 14:13)

- At that time you will ask in my name, and I do not say that I will ask the Father on your behalf. (Jn 16:26)

God does not receive the prayers of people like the Pharisees, who pretend to be holy and pray to enhance people's perception of them. God accepts the prayer of a person who stores God's word in his heart, a person who beats his chest in confession and repentance of sin (Lk 18:9-14). Since God already knows what people need, prayers should be made in secret. There is no reason to babble about the same thing over and over (Mt 6:5-8). Anyone who

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understands the difference between the consequences for having a sincere heart and the consequences for being pretentious will pray before God with a heart of fear and trembling.

- [9]Jesus also told this parable to some who were confident that they were righteous and looked down on everyone else. [10]"Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. [11]The Pharisee stood and prayed about himself like this: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people: extortionists, unrighteous people, adulterers – or even like this tax collector. [12]I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of everything I get.' [13]The tax collector, however, stood far off and would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, be merciful to me, sinner that I am!' [14]I tell you that this man went down to his home justified rather than the Pharisee. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted." (Lk 18:9-14)

- [5]"Whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, because they love to pray while standing in synagogues and on street corners so that people can see them. Truly I say to you, they have their reward. [6]But whenever you pray, go into your room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you. [7]When you pray, do not babble repetitiously like the Gentiles, because they think that by their many words they will be heard. [8]Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. (Mt 6:5-8)

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The following clearly explains each verse that appears in the Lord's Prayer (Mt 6:9-13):

Our Father in heaven (Mt 6:9)

You must be God's child in order to call God "Father." Since God is a spirit, you must be born again by the seed of God to be God's child. Thus, only those who are born again by the seed of the holy spirit, which is God's word (Lk 8:11), can rightfully call God "Father."

The Jews called God their father, but Jesus told them that their father was the devil (Jn 8:41-44). Their spirits were born of the seed of the devil, not the seed of God (Mt 13:25-28, 36-39). The seed of the devil is the word of the devil's thoughts. When Revelation is fulfilled, in order to call God "Father," all believers must be born again through the word of God as it is recorded in the book that Jesus opens (Rv 10) and through the testimony about the physical fulfillment.

Your kingdom come (Mt 6:10)

God's kingdom in the spiritual world descends upon God's people and kingdom here in the physical world. After the people of Israel came out of Egypt, God dwelled inside the tabernacle Moses built (Ex 25:8). After King Solomon built the temple in Jerusalem (1 Kgs 6) to take the place of the tabernacle, God dwelled there too. At the time of the first coming, God's kingdom in the spiritual world descended upon Jesus (Lk 3:22; Mt 4:17), and at the time of the second coming, it descends upon Shincheonji and dwells with it for eternity (Rv 21:1-5).

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Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven (Mt 6:10)

First, God accomplishes his will in heaven (the spiritual world). Then, he accomplishes it in the physical world according to what has already been accomplished in heaven. God created heaven, the spiritual world, before he created the physical world. He also created man in his own image (Gn 1:26). Moses saw the things of heaven and built the tabernacle according to what he saw (Ex 25:8-9; Heb 8:5). Jesus saw what God was doing and acted accordingly (Jn 5:17-19). Today, a new tabernacle called Shincheonji is being created on the earth as well (Rv 7; Rv 14:1-5). It has the same form as the holy city New Jerusalem in the spiritual world (Rv 4; Rv 21:9-27). This is why, believers of today must find Shincheonji, which God is creating according to the Bible (Mt 7:7-8). The spiritual heaven will descend (Rv 21:1-2) on the place where God's will is done "on earth as it is in heaven." This is just like when heaven descended upon Jesus at the time of the first coming.

Give us today our daily bread (Mt 6:11)

This food we request from God is spiritual food. God, who clothes the grass of the field and feeds the birds of the air, does not leave his precious believers, who cannot even be compared to the grass and birds, hungry and in need of clothes. God meets our needs because he knows, better than anyone else, that we need things to eat and drink. A concrete example of this is when God provided manna and quail as the Israelites' daily food. That food, however, was for the flesh; it could not give eternal life.

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The food we must seek is the word of God, which gives life to our spirits and helps us to reach eternal life. Physical food gives life only to our flesh; it cannot give life to our spirits. The pastor who gives the food at the proper time (Mt 24:45-46) provides God's word, which is spiritual food. Therefore, everyone must find this pastor, who teaches God's word at the proper time. The pastor who receives and eats the opened book from the angel's hand (Rv 10) is the one who gives the food at the proper time—the time of the fulfillment of Revelation, which is today.

At the first coming, the food believers had to find was the word of life from Jesus. Jesus said that because he was the bread of life, anyone who ate him would have eternal life (Jn 6:48-51). Eating Jesus, who is the living bread, is storing Jesus' words in our hearts and obeying them.

When Jesus left, however, the food was no longer given; it was hidden. How, then, can we eat this hidden bread (manna)?

Jesus promised to give the hidden manna (Rv 2:17) to the one who fights and overcomes the group of Satan according to the prophecies of Revelation. Jesus promised to give this hidden manna only to the one who overcomes, not to anyone else. This manna, which was in God's hand, was sealed with seven seals (Rv 5:1). Jesus breaks the seals, and the recorded words of the opened book are conveyed to peoples, nations, languages, and kings (Rv 10). At that time, those who eat the revealed words will attain salvation and eternal life (Jn 6:53-58; Rv 22:16-17).

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Forgive us our debts, as we ourselves have forgiven our debtors (Mt 6:12)

Out of his great love for his people, God gave his one and only son as an atoning sacrifice (Jn 3:16). This is why Jesus unsparingly laid down his life at the cross. As sinners, we were unable to escape the eternal punishment of hell. By the love of God and Jesus, however, our sins have been atoned. There is no greater grace under heaven than this.

Since God and Jesus have atoned for our sins, we must forgive the sins of our brothers. The brother who has sinned against me is also, just as I am, a child of God who is loved and forgiven by God and Jesus.

According to the parable of Mt 18:23-25, if a person receives forgiveness from God for sins that he can never wash with his own strength and still calls to account the sin a fellow brother committed against him, God will repay and rebuke him for the sin that had previously been atoned. Therefore, we must forgive our brothers' sins. Jesus said that whatever is released on earth is released in heaven (Mt 18:18). Jesus also said, "So also my heavenly Father will do to you, if each of you does not forgive your brother from your heart," (Mt 18:35).

Because God is love, those born of God will love their brothers. Conversely, failure to love one's brothers is proof that one does not know God (1 Jn 4:8, 16). Just as God loves sinners and gave us his one and only son, we should forgive and love one another. Forgiving the sin of our brother does not cause that sin to come to

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us. Jesus said that love covers a multitude of sins and is the fulfillment of the law (1 Pt 4:8; Rom 13:10). Faith, hope, and prophecy come to an end when they are fulfilled, but let us not forget that love remains forever (1 Cor 13:8).

And do not lead us into temptation (Mt 6:13)

Jesus said that at the end of the age many would be tempted to betray and hate one another (Mt 24:10). He also said that those who endure to keep his words would be kept from the hour of trial that is coming upon the whole world (Rv 3:10).

At the time of his first coming, Jesus was tempted by the devil in the desert, but Jesus overcame the devil through the word (Mt 4:1-11). In Rv 17, Apostle John is led by the holy spirit to the desert just like Jesus was. John is greatly astonished when he sees the prostitute, who is sitting on the beast with seven heads and ten horns, drunk with the blood of those who bore the testimony of Jesus. This means that Apostle John is briefly tempted.

Peter said, "Dear friends, do not be astonished that a trial by fire is occurring among you, as though something strange were happening to you," (1 Pt 4:12). Just as Peter said, believers will have to endure various trials. Believers must remember Jesus' words in Rv 3:10, which warn of an hour of trial that is coming upon the whole world. The trials initiated by the devil peak in the end times. Anyone who fails to overcome these trials becomes a servant of the devil. Therefore, believers must overcome these trials through the words of the Bible, just as Jesus overcame.

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But deliver us from the evil one (Mt 6:13)

God is good; God is the only one who is good (Mt 19:17; Mk 10:18). Anything that opposes God is evil. Evil spirits, pastors who have received evil spirits, and the congregation members of such pastors fall into this category of evil. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the serpent, which are recorded in Genesis, are evil. Satan and the false pastor, which appear throughout Revelation, are also evil. Since the time of Adam, anyone who has opposed God's chosen people and anyone who participated in the killing of the prophets and apostles is evil. Moreover, since God has created Shincheonji and is dwelling with us today, anyone who opposes Shincheonji is also evil. God has created Shincheonji according to the Bible, and the twelve tribes of Shincheonji are God's kingdom.

Peter said, "Your enemy the devil, like a roaring lion, is on the prowl looking for someone to devour," (1 Pt 5:8). Believers must put on the armor of the word and of faith to avoid falling to the devil. Believers must develop the ability to overcome Satan and free those ensnared by him (Eph 6:10-17).

In every generation, when the previous world was corrupted, God chose a new pastor and began a new generation. Physical Israel existed before Jesus, but Jesus created Spiritual Israel at the time of his first coming. Today, at the time of the second coming, New Spiritual Israel is being created according to Rv 7 and 14. The twelve tribes (the 144,000) being created at this time, along with the great multitude dressed in white, are righteous. They are God's kingdom and righteousness. At this time, the dragon's group—the

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beast with seven heads and ten horns along with the nations, languages, peoples, and multitudes that belong to it—belong to evil and are therefore judged. This is the separation of righteousness and evil, the righteous ones and the evil ones. Hence, a person praying the Lord's Prayer (Mt 6:13) is asking not to be tempted by the dragon's group. They are asking God to save them from evil today, in the time of Revelation's fulfillment.

We, Shincheonji, are God's kingdom, created here on earth as it is in heaven. We are sharing God's daily bread. We pray not to be tempted and to be delivered from the evil one. We forgive and love one another. We are making truth and peace our righteousness.

8. The commandments of God and the teachings of men

[Ref.: Mt 15:1-20; Mt 12:34-37; Hos 6:6; Mt 7:21]

How are the commandments of God and the rules of men different? Which one must believers keep?

Believers must learn and obey all the commandments of God according to their true meaning and original purpose. God's commandments should not be confused with the rules of men. Through the events of Jesus' first coming, let us understand the type of spiritual life people lead if they learn the teachings of men. We must also understand the final outcome for people who have this type of faith.

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Approximately 2,000 years ago, the teachers of the law and the Pharisees, who were the leaders of that generation, questioned Jesus, "Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders?" (Mt 15:1-2). The Pharisees were very concerned with teaching and keeping the traditions of the elders (Mk 7:3).

- [1]Then Pharisees and experts in the law came from Jerusalem to Jesus and said, [2]"Why do your disciples disobey the tradition of the elders? For they don't wash their hands when they eat." (Mt 15:1-2)

- For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they perform a ritual washing, holding fast to the tradition of the elders. (Mk 7:3)

What are the traditions of the elders? Elder is another word for leader and a tradition is something that has been passed down from one generation to the next. The Jewish leaders created detailed regulations and kept them from generation to generation, justifying themselves by thinking that they were strictly keeping God's commands. These regulations are the traditions of the elders. It is not, therefore, surprising that Jesus and his disciples looked strange in the eyes of the Pharisees and teachers of the law because they did not hold to these traditions of the elders. Jesus and his disciples did not consider the traditions of the elders to be important. Instead, they taught and obeyed God's commands. Jesus said that the traditions of the Jews were breaking God's commands. Considering this, it is clear that the traditions of the elders are the rules and teachings of men. The laws or commandments God gave include honoring one's parents. The Jews, however, claimed that the traditions of

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the elders permitted them to offer to God what should have been given to their parents. They broke God's commands (Mt 15:3-6) by following the thoughts (commands) of men.

Jesus quoted the words of Isaiah the prophet (Is 29:13), "This people honors me with their lips but their heart is far from me, and they worship me in vain, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men," (Mt 15:7-9). Saying that their hearts are far from him means that people have strayed far away from the heart of God. God said, "For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings," (Hos 6:6, KJV). Jesus said, "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter into the kingdom of heaven—only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven," (Mt 7:21). Therefore, only those who know God and God's will can enter heaven.

By keeping the traditions of the elders (the rules of men), all the Jews became obsessed with formalities. Their spiritual lives ran contrary to God's will. They might have called, "God, God," with their lips, but in reality, they were not with God.

✥ [3]He answered them, "And why do you disobey the commandment of God because of your tradition? [4]For God said, 'Honor your father and mother' and 'Whoever insults his father or mother must be put to death.' [5]But you say, 'If someone tells his father or mother, "Whatever help you would have received from me is given to God," [6]he does not need to honor his father.' You have nullified the word of God on account of your tradition. [7]Hypocrites! Isaiah prophesied correctly about you when he said, [8]"This people honors me with their lips, but

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their heart is far from me, [9]and they worship me in vain, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'" (Mt 15:3-9)

Jesus said what truly defiles a person is not what goes into his mouth but what comes out of it (Mt 15:11). Food that people put in their mouths goes through the digestive system and passes through the body; it cannot make them unclean. People are defiled by evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, and slander, which all come from the heart. People's hearts do not become unclean just by failing to wash their hands according to the traditions of the elders (Mt 15:17-20).

- What defiles a person is not what goes into the mouth; it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles a person. (Mt 15:11)

Jesus said to the teachers of the law and the Pharisees, "Offspring of vipers! How are you able to say anything good, since you are evil? For the mouth speaks from what fills the heart. The good person brings good things out of his good treasury, and the evil person brings evil things out of his evil treasury," (Mt 12:34-35). He also said, "I tell you that on the day of judgment, people will give an account for every worthless word they speak. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned," (Mt 12:36-37). Anyone who hears evil words from an evil heart and stores them in his or her own heart becomes unclean. Since it is what comes out of a person's heart that makes a soul unclean, it is much more important for us to recognize what fills our hearts than worrying about what to eat and drink. We must ask ourselves,

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"What fills my heart? What kind of words come out of my mouth? What kind of words am I listening to and accepting?"

The Pharisees were offended (Mt 15:12) when they heard what Jesus said (Mt 15:3-9). They could not understand Jesus' words. The traditions of the elders (the teachings of men) that the teachers of the law and the Pharisees were teaching to all the Jews were not the words God had planted within them. Anything that is not a command of God will eventually be judged and will disappear. The teachers of the law and the Pharisees were spiritually blind because they could not understand God's word even when looking at it. Since these blind men were guiding people down the path of faith using the teachings of men, those who followed were also blind. Just as a blind man leads another blind man into the pit (Mt 15:14), believers who follow a pastor teaching the rules and traditions of men will end up in the deepest, darkest pit—the pit of hell (2 Pt 2:4).

❖ "Leave them! They are blind guides. If someone who is blind leads another who is blind, both will fall into a pit." (Mt 15:14)

Is not this type of activity happening today? Content that is not in the Bible, teachings contrary to the commandments of God recorded in the Bible, ecclesiastical laws, and teachings made by men—because these things have been passed down for so long, people are unable to distinguish whether they come from God or from men. All believers must question whether or not the pastors of this generation are teaching the commandments of God. We must verify whether or not we are giving more credence to

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the rules and teachings of men than the commandments of God. The priests of Jesus' first coming are the same as today's pastors.

Both the disciples and the Pharisees called Jesus "teacher." The disciples called themselves "apostles." Although biblical history extends back roughly 6,000 years, Protestant seminaries have only been in Korea for the last 50 years. In modern Christianity a person can only be acknowledged as a pastor and as orthodox if he graduates from a seminary and receives the laying on of hands.

Furthermore, anyone who does not receive the laying on of hands is considered a heretic. If a person who has received the holy spirit and the word and who is faithfully conveying the gospel is considered a heretic simply because he was not anointed as a pastor, then, by that definition, the Old Testament prophets, Jesus, and the twelve disciples would also be heretics. They never attended seminary, nor did they receive the laying on of hands to become pastors. If they are heretics, why do we all believe and proclaim the gospel these heretics revealed to us? Actually, it could be said that the church, which teaches God's word, is a seminary. If you are only going to learn the teachings of men at a seminary, you would be better served by praying to God, receiving the holy spirit, and then beginning to teach (Acts 1:8, 2:1-4).

We at Shincheonji have not learned the theology of this world. We do not use the term "pastor" in the same way the churches of the world do because we do not follow the Christian tradition of ordainment by the laying on of hands. Instead, we use the term "instructor" for people who teach the revelation of heaven by

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receiving the holy spirit. The Bible says that the holy spirit searches all things; it has mastery over even the deepest things (secrets) of God (1 Cor 2:10). Even Apostle Paul threw away everything he had learned from the world. He received and taught only the revealed word (Gal 1:11-12). We at Shincheonji, with the holy spirit and through the word of revelation, are testifying about the prophecies and their fulfillment by answering the questions who, what, when, where, why, and how.

9. Revealed faith and the law

[Ref.: Jn 16:8-11; Gal 3:6, 23-28; Jn 1:1-14; Lk 16:16; Heb 10:1-18]

How are revealed faith and the law different?

The law was given through God and Moses, but faith came through God and Jesus (Jn 1:17). People obsessed with the law called Jesus a heretic when they saw his faith, but Jesus declared that true faith was in the fulfillment of the law. He also said, "Until heaven and earth pass away not the smallest letter or stroke of a letter will pass from the law until everything takes place," (Mt 5:18).

When Jesus said that the law and the prophets were in effect until John the Baptist, he meant that the law came to an end with the work of John the Baptist (Lk 16:16). However, Jesus also said, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have not come to abolish these things but to fulfill them," (Mt 5:17). The free law practiced by Jesus completed the Old Testament law.

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For example, according to Moses' law, it is only when a person actually murders another that they have committed the sin of murder. In Jesus' free law, on the other hand, a person is guilty of the sin of murder merely by hating a brother. The free law goes beyond Moses' law. It is a law of a much higher level that regulates people's hearts as well as their actions.

Jesus said, "You will know at that time that I am in my Father and you are in me and I am in you," (Jn 14:20). Paul said, "Now if anyone does not have the spirit of Christ, this person does not belong to him," (Rom 8:9). Jesus bore the cross so that his spirit can live within us after we are cleansed of our sins. God worked within Jesus, who had no sin. Similarly, if the spirit of Jesus dwells within us, it prevents us from sinning. This is the completion of the law.

Regarding sin, the advocate, who comes in the name of Jesus, says that sin is not believing in Jesus (Jn 16:8-9). Abraham was considered righteous by God, not because of his actions, but because of his faith (Gn 15:6; Gal 3:6).

Before Jesus resolved our sins, we were bowls that stored original sin, hereditary sin, and personal sin. If a person can empty the bowl of their heart of its sin, then the holy spirit comes to that person. People, however, are incapable of washing away their sins with the law alone (Heb 10:1-4). Since Jesus bore the cross on our behalf to rid us of sin, everyone who believes in him is freed from their sins. They become righteous by faith (Heb 10:11-14) and the holy spirit enters them. The spirit of Jesus, who bore the cross, dwells within us. Since the spirit of Jesus leads us on the path of

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righteousness instead of the path of sin, we are able to live a life free of sin.

Until the faith that was to be revealed came, believers were held down, imprisoned under the law. The law was an elementary teacher leading believers to Christ. When the faith that was to be revealed came, however, believers were freed from the law. It was through this revealed faith that people became righteous sons of God. Anyone freed from the law and born again is united with Christ (Gal 3:23-28; Jn 1:1-14). This is why with Jesus, all of the law, the prophets, and the prophecies of the Old Testament came to an end (Lk 16:16). Jesus gives us the gospel of heaven and allows us to obtain eternal life.

Believers of the Old Testament period were under the old covenant, which God had promised to fulfill. In other words, they lived within the faith that was to be revealed and were locked up under the law. When Jesus came and fulfilled the Old Testament, believers were finally able to attain salvation through the gospel of Jesus Christ—the faith that was revealed. Today, believers of the New Testament period eat that gospel of Jesus Christ as spiritual food. At the same time, however, they live their spiritual lives through another faith that is to be revealed. This continues until all the prophecies of the New Testament, including Revelation, are fulfilled. When the prophecies of the New Testament are fulfilled and appear as physical realities, believers must have that revealed faith. At that time, regardless of denomination or personal relationships, anyone who obtains the revealed faith receives salvation.

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This revealed faith is Jesus' new gospel and it is eaten within God's kingdom (Mt 26:26-29).

God's kingdom will appear at the time of the second coming when Revelation is fulfilled. God's kingdom consists of those who are purchased with Jesus' blood (Rv 5:9-10)—the twelve tribes of New Spiritual Israel (Rv 7, 14). Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies in his first coming and fed that fulfillment to his disciples as spiritual food. Today, in the same way, Jesus fulfills the New Testament prophecies and feeds their fulfillment to us as spiritual food (Rv 2:17).

The faith that will be revealed is faith in the prophecies of the sealed book in Rv 5. The faith that is revealed is faith in the prophecies and their fulfillment that are recorded in the open book of Rv 10. Jesus opens the book that was sealed with seven seals. Then, he gives that open book to the promised pastor through an angel. The pastor who receives the book testifies to believers about the prophecies and their physical fulfillment. Having the revealed faith is receiving and believing in this testimony. The sealed book has already been opened, and we at Shincheonji are testifying about its physical fulfillment, which has been revealed.

No one can receive the holy spirit by acting under the law; this can only occur via the revealed faith. As stated earlier, people locked up under the law have sin, which prevents the holy spirit from being with them. The holy spirit does come to us, however, when we become righteous by believing in Jesus Christ, who bore

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the cross for our sins. People led by the holy spirit are able to keep the perfect free law.

Let us not become like the foolish Galatians, who began with the holy spirit only to return to flesh under the law (Gal 3:1-3). Just as Apostle Paul confessed (Gal 2:20), because we have been crucified with Christ, Christ lives within us. The life we live now is to become the body of God's son, who loved us and gave his life for us. This is how we live by faith.

Today, those who believe in Jesus have been locked up under the New Testament's faith that was to be revealed, which is faith in the New Testament prophecies (Revelation). Since Jesus has fulfilled those prophecies today, believers must now possess the revealed faith. Once people have obtained the revealed faith, the holy spirit can come and lead them.

Jesus' fulfillment of the prophecies of both the Old and New Testaments in his first and second comings, respectively, allow us to obtain salvation when we believe in the word and its physical fulfillment. Therefore, let us thank Jesus Christ, who has freed us from sin, come into our hearts, and is leading us on the path of righteousness.

For the past 6,000 years since Adam's sin, no one has been able to resolve the sins of mankind. It is impossible to get rid of someone else's sin when one cannot even cleanse his or her own through the knowledge and actions of men. Regardless of whether you are dead or alive, the only way to resolve sin is faith in Jesus' cross.

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For Buddhists, Confucianists, and Christians—no matter what religion you espouse, sin can only be resolved through Jesus' cross. No one can receive the holy spirit or enter heaven (i.e., the holy kingdom and paradise) to receive salvation without first resolving their sins. If it were possible to resolve the sins of mankind without bearing the cross, Jesus would never have prayed for God to take away the cup he had to drink. Because, however, Jesus knew that the cross was the only path to salvation, he prayed, "Yet not what I will, but what you will," (Mt 26:39). Jesus' blood is the precious blood that resolves the sin of all people. If we receive the atonement of sin through the blood of Jesus' cross, Jesus will come into our hearts and lead us. This is faith and the path of salvation.

10. Prophecy and the faith of physical fulfillment

[Ref.: Rv 10; Rv 1:1-3; Jn 19:30; Jn 14:2-3, 20, 29; Rv 21:6]

The contents of the Bible can largely be divided into four categories: history, teachings, prophecy, and fulfillment. Among these, the prophecies are always fulfilled in order: betrayal of the chosen people, destruction of the chosen people at the hand of the gentiles, and salvation through the one who overcomes (2 Thes 2:1-4). The prophecies are always fulfilled according to a specific process. Prophecy must be made first. Then, the messenger who prepares the way appears right before the promised messenger finally arrives. The promised messenger fulfills the prophecies in the correct order

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with the help of the Lord who wrote them. This is when the trumpet is sounded to proclaim the fulfillment. Then, believers receive salvation by seeing and believing in the fulfillment that has come according to the prophecies.

Without fail, God fulfills his prophecies when the appointed time arrives (Hb 2:2-3). For example, everything that God promised in his covenant with Abraham, he fulfilled at the time of Moses. God told Abraham that his descendants would be strangers in a gentile land for 400 years, but that after they had suffered, they would come out with great possessions and return to inherit the land of Canaan (Gn 15:13-21). God also told Abraham that he would make him fruitful as the father of many nations (Gn 17:5-6). Just as God promised, the 70 members of Jacob's family went to Egypt and prospered under Pharaoh. After 430 years (Ex 12:40-41), Moses led his people out and headed towards the land of Canaan. At that time, there were roughly 600,000 Israelites, even when counting only the young men. Moses, however, died with Canaan right in front of him. It was Joshua who succeeded Moses to enter and take possession of the land of Canaan. In a similar way, God first prophesied in the Old Testament and then sent Jesus to fulfill his prophecies (Jn 19:30).

God prophesied about the things he would fulfill in the future and recorded them in the Bible so that there would be a testimony at the time of their fulfillment (Jn 14:29). Before acting, God revealed to his prophets what he would do in the future (Am 3:7). Thus, when

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the physical fulfillment of the prophecies appears, the prophecies act as evidence for that physical fulfillment.

Without understanding the prophecies in the Bible, no one will be able to recognize or believe in the physical fulfillment that appears according to the word even after seeing and hearing it for themselves. Only a person who understands the meaning of the prophecies and eagerly awaits their physical fulfillment can recognize and believe in that fulfillment.

People who believe in God and Jesus must have signs of their belief. According to Mt 7:22-23, prophesying, driving out demons, or performing many miracles, all in the Lord's name—these things are not sufficient. When the prophecies are fulfilled, however, seeing and believing in the physical fulfillment testifies about one's belief in God and Jesus. The ability to believe in the physical fulfillment comes from the prophecies themselves.

Jesus came into this world as the true light, but his people neither believed in him nor did they welcome him (Jn 1:9-11). God, however, gave evidence that it was he who had sent Jesus, his son. Jesus said that the work he was doing on behalf of God testified that he was sent by God (Jn 5:36-38).

✥ 36"But I have a testimony greater than that from John. For the deeds that the Father has assigned me to complete – the deeds I am now doing – testify about me that the Father has sent me. 37And the Father who sent me has himself testified about me. You people have never heard his voice nor seen his form at any time, 38nor do you have his

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word residing in you, because you do not believe the one whom he sent. (Jn 5:36-38)

Jesus came and acted according to what was prophesied in the Bible; he gave us evidence that he was the Christ whom God had promised. It is useful to examine carefully some of the ways Jesus fulfilled the Bible (Jn 19:30). According to the prophecies of the Old Testament, he was born of a virgin in Bethlehem and escaped danger by fleeing to Egypt. When he returned he began his ministry in Galilee of the gentiles. He entered Jerusalem riding on the foal of a donkey. He sowed the seed of heaven in his field, and he established the new covenant with his blood. After being betrayed by a friend with whom he had eaten at the table, he bore the cross, resurrected, and ascended to heaven. This linkage of prophecy with fulfillment becomes the basis of our belief that Jesus is the Christ. If Jesus had not come and acted in accordance with the Old Testament prophecies, no one would acknowledge him as the Christ.

In Jn 5:39, Jesus said that although people studied the scriptures thoroughly because they thought that the scriptures could give them eternal life, those scriptures (i.e., the Old Testament) were actually testifying about Jesus. Clearly, it is through the Bible that believers must recognize and believe in the promised pastor.

✦ [39]You study the scriptures thoroughly because you think in them you possess eternal life, and it is these same scriptures that testify about me, [40]but you are not willing to come to me so that you may have life. (Jn 5:39-40)

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Jesus, who fulfilled the Old Testament, prophesied about the future and promised he would send a pastor. The Old Testament testified about one person in Jesus, God's promised pastor. It is no exaggeration to say that the New Testament testifies about the one pastor Jesus promised. Just as he fulfilled all the prophecies of the Old Testament, Jesus fulfills all the prophecies of the New Testament in his second coming (Rv 21:6).

After Jesus ascended to heaven, he used Apostle John to record things that would occur in the future. He revealed the future to John in a vision, and the book of Revelation is a record of what John saw. Today, as people who are facing the end times, we must see and believe in the prophecies of Revelation and their physical fulfillment. Until the faith to be revealed arrives, believers are tied down and locked up under the law. The law is like an elementary teacher that leads people to Jesus Christ. After the faith to be revealed has come, however, believers are no longer under the law but are united with Christ in faith (Gal 3:23-28). Apostle John said that anyone who adds or takes away words from the prophecies will be forbidden to enter heaven and will receive the plagues recorded in Revelation (Rv 22:18-19). God brings the 6,000 years of work since Adam to an end by fulfilling Revelation (Rv 21:6). This is why Jesus said, "Until heaven and earth pass away not the smallest letter or stroke of a letter will pass from the law until everything takes place," (Mt 5:18).

The events that will occur at the Lord's second coming are also recorded in Mt 24, which can be considered a condensed version

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of Revelation. Its content can be summarized as follows: At the end of the world there is a battle between the chosen people and the gentiles. This battle ends when the gentiles defeat the chosen people and stand in the holy pulpit. It is the people who recognize the events of the end and flee to the mountain who will receive salvation. This same content also appears in Rv 6-7. Isaiah 29:9-13, however, says that because God's vision is like words sealed in a book, none of the prophets or the seers (heads) can understand. This same concept also appears in Rv 5, where no one is able to open, much less see or read, the book sealed with seven seals that is in God's right hand. The consequence of the inaccessibility of God's word is that people can only learn and teach according to the rules and traditions of men. Believers who attempt to draw closer to the Lord do so only with their lips because their hearts are far from God (Is 29:13). God said he would once more perform an astounding work among these people (Is 29:14). The astounding work God referred to is the breaking of the seals on the sealed book by Jesus. This means Jesus fulfills the prophecies and makes his promised pastor testify about the words of prophecy recorded in the book along with their physical fulfillment. If this word is being fulfilled in the present generation, is it possible for all Christians to believe in this and receive salvation?

After Jesus breaks the seven seals and opens the book (Rv 6, 8), the trumpet is blown (Rv 11:15) to proclaim the words recorded in the book and their physical fulfillment. This is the same trumpet that is blown to gather believers from one end of heaven to the

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other when Jesus returns with his angels (Mt 24:31). Isaiah 18:3 says that when the trumpet is blown, all the people of the world will hear. All believers must listen for the sound of the trumpet that announces the Lord's return. Those who gather after hearing the sound of the trumpet of salvation mentioned earlier become the twelve tribes of New Spiritual Israel. Let us learn about this in more detail.

Jesus and the twelve apostles, who died as martyrs, created the holy city New Jerusalem (Rv 21) in the spiritual world. Before his ascension at the first coming, Jesus said to his disciples, "I am going away to make ready a place for you. And if I go and make ready a place for you, I will come again and take you to be with me, so that where I am you may be too," (Jn 14:2-3). That place he went to prepare is the holy city New Jerusalem in the spiritual world. Just as it has been done in heaven, the twelve tribes (144,000 people) of New Spiritual Israel are created here on earth today according to the prophecies in Rv 7 and Rv 14. At that time, the spirits of the martyrs in heaven descend and unite with the members of the twelve tribes that are created here in the physical world; the spirits and flesh become one body.

On that day, just as God is in Jesus, the spirits of Jesus and his disciples will come into us and our bodies will be transformed into spiritual bodies (Jn 14:20; 1 Cor 15:51-54). Even Paul's statement that a person who lacks the spirit of Christ is not a Christian (Rom 8:9) testifies that the spirit of Christ will be within people. This is related to Rv 20 where the spirits of those who were beheaded and those

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who are still alive participate with Christ in the first resurrection. Jesus, who overcame at the first coming, unites with the one who overcomes today to fulfill the prophecies. The faith we need is the faith of seeing the fulfillment of the prophecies and believing in that fulfillment. People who believe in the prophecies recorded in the Bible and yet deny their physical fulfillment like the chosen people of Physical Israel did in the time of the first coming—these people will receive judgment instead of salvation.

One must know the meaning of the prophecies in order to believe, keep, and acknowledge the true identities of their fulfillment. When Revelation is fulfilled, Satan will have deceived all nations (Rv 18:2-3, 20:3). Therefore, anyone who does not know the words of prophecy will be deceived by Satan. This is why believers must remain awake with the words of prophecy. Until now, believers all over the world have been carrying out their lives of faith with hope. Today, as Revelation is being fulfilled, believers must hear the sound of the angel's trumpet that announces the Lord's return and go to find the place where the trumpet is being blown. This is the way to understand that the prophecies have been fulfilled, the way to believe in their physical fulfillment, and the way to receive salvation. Just as we believe that God came to the pastor promised in the Old Testament (Jesus) and fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies, we must see and believe when Jesus comes with his angels to the pastor promised in the New Testament (the one who overcomes) and fulfills the New Testament prophecies.

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Today, we at Shincheonji are proclaiming all over the world that the new covenant, Revelation, has been fulfilled according to the prophecies. We at Shincheonji have fulfilled the things that were never fulfilled or testified about until now; we have testified about what we have seen and heard. We at Shincheonji have seen and testified about the appearance of the seven messengers and the Nicolaitans, which appear in Rv 1-3. We have testified about the appearance of the dragon's group—the beast of Babylon, which has seven heads and ten horns—from Rv 12, 13, and 17. We have fought against the group of the dragon. We have overcome, and we have created the twelve tribes. We have testified about learning the new song, and we have testified that the beast has been scattered in seven directions after being defeated in battle. We have testified about the harvesting of the wheat from the field where Jesus sowed his seed, and we have testified that there is a wedding banquet of the Lamb. Furthermore, we have testified about the promised pastor—the overcomer who has received the revelation.

I pray that all believers will make the words of prophecy their path and their lamp; I pray that all will see, believe, and keep the physical fulfillment of the prophecies in order to attain salvation. I pray that all will become the people of heaven they hope to become.

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11. Faith and the people of heaven

[Ref.: Mt 8:5-13; Lk 18:8; Jn 1:9-13; Jn 10]

When and where will those who become the people of heaven by faith appear? Who are they? According to prophecy, when the Lord returns in the end times, the sons of the kingdom will be thrown out, and others will come from the east and west to take their places in heaven. When Jesus saw the faith of the gentile centurion, who was in charge of many soldiers, he said, "I tell you the truth, I have not found such faith in anyone in Israel." He also said, "I tell you, many will come from the east and west to share the banquet with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, but the sons of the kingdom will be thrown out into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth," (Mt 8:5-13).

Who are the sons of the kingdom who are thrown outside and who are those who come from the east and west to take their places in heaven? When will this happen and where is this heaven? To which of these groups do I belong?

Everyone who wants to live a life of faith, everyone who truly sets his or her hopes on heaven, and everyone who truly believes in Jesus should strive to understand the meaning of Mt 8:5-13 in order to take a place in heaven. Those who claim to believe in Jesus without believing in his word are liars without true faith.

The words Jesus spoke in Mt 8:5-13 apply to both the first and second comings. We will start with the first coming.

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It is written that many will come from the east and west to take their places in heaven. To what is this heaven referring, and who are those that will take their places there? At the first coming, Jesus was heaven on earth (Mt 13:24) because the spiritual heaven (Mt 4:17) descended to the physical world and rested on him. Therefore, among all the people in the world at that time, the only people who took their places in heaven were the ones who went to Jesus to become the people of heaven.

Next, we will examine the identities of the sons of the kingdom who are thrown outside.

At the time of the first coming, Physical Israel had long been divided in two. The northern part of Israel included eleven of the twelve tribes, and its capital city was Samaria. The southern part was called Judah after the name of its only tribe, and its capital was Jerusalem. Northern Israel was considered to be a gentile nation, because God had only acknowledged Judah as his chosen people. This is why the people of Judah and Jerusalem were the sons of the kingdom at the time of the first coming.

When Jesus mentioned the sons of the kingdom he was referring to Jerusalem, which Zechariah and his son John the Baptist were supposed to lead. John 10 says that the hired hand abandons the sheep and flees when he sees the wolf coming. This wolf represents the Pharisees who invaded and sat in the holy temple. The hired hands that fled at that time were the rulers of Jerusalem, and the sheep were its people.

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The people of Judah and Jerusalem that left God like Adam and Eve did were the sons of the kingdom that were thrown outside. Jesus was shining the light of life on them, but their dark hearts could not perceive it. They could not receive God, who came to his own land within Jesus. This was why they were thrown out. The faith of Physical Israel at that time was even smaller than the faith of a gentile centurion. This was what took place at the time of Jesus' first coming. This was why Jesus brought Physical Israel to an end and created Spiritual Israel (Jn 1:9-13). Physical Israel was cast out of God's kingdom just like Adam was. The people who inherited heaven were those who came to Jesus from the east and west and believed.

What, then, is the nature of the Lord's second coming?

Just as the prophecy of Mal 3 was fulfilled at the time of the first coming (Mt 11:10-14), Rv 1-3 describes the appearance of the tabernacle of the lampstands that prepares the way. At the time of the first coming, the Pharisees and teachers of the law, who were the thieves and robbers mentioned in Jn 10, appeared in the temple of the messenger preparing the way (i.e., John the Baptist) before Jesus did. Similarly, at the time of the second coming, the Nicolaitans (Satan) invade the temple of the messenger preparing the way (i.e., the church of the seven golden lampstands) before the promised pastor comes. Once there, the Nicolaitans deceive the congregation members of the temple into eating food sacrificed to idols—into believing teachings of the idol (Rv 2:14-15).

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That is when the promised messenger (Rv 22:16) comes and sends the letters to the church of the seven golden lampstands (Rv 2-3). The letters warn the church members not to eat the food sacrificed to idols (the teachings of Satan). In other words, the letters are a warning not to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The letters also urge the messengers to repent of the sin of adultery. Even though the light of truth is shining on their spirits, which have become as dark as night, their darkness cannot understand the light (Jn 1:1-5). At the first coming, Jesus judged Physical Israel because they did not believe in him, and he created Spiritual Israel with the people who did believe in him.

Similarly, at the time of the second coming, the church of the seven golden lampstands refuses to repent even after receiving the letters Jesus sends through the promised pastor (the one who speaks on behalf of Jesus). They decide instead, to eat the food sacrificed to idols given by the Nicolaitans (Satan), to receive the Nicolaitan teachings, and to commit adultery with them. This is why Jesus judges them—the sun, moon, and stars in Rv 6—and casts them out. They are like Adam in Gn 3 and like the sons of the kingdom (Judah and Jerusalem) at the time of the first coming (Mt 8:11-12). Jesus asked whether he would find faith in the world when he returns (Lk 18:8), because today, too, people who do not believe and understand are judged and cast out (Rv 6).

After this happens, the promised pastor (the one who overcomes) receives the open book, which Jesus gives to the promised pastor through an angel. Then, when the promised pastor preaches the

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words he received to many peoples, nations, languages, and kings, many people come from the east and west to take their places in heaven. These people are the twelve tribes (144,000) of Rv 7 and the multitude dressed in white. At that time, the people of the tabernacle that prepares the way (i.e., the sun, moon, and stars of Rv 6, Judah and Jerusalem, and the subjects of the kingdom) are all cast out of heaven.

Believers should examine the Bible to know the true God and the one he sent (Jn 17:3). We must also read it to know the identity of the devil, so that we are not deceived by him. Matthew 24 records the signs of the second coming and of the battle between God's kingdom and Satan's kingdom. Matthew 25 is about the qualifications we must have to welcome the Lord according to God's will. The characters that appear in the book of Revelation belong either to God or to Satan. The major event of Revelation is a war between these two kingdoms. If God's people are victorious, they win control over everything; if they are defeated, they lose everything.

Believers must choose between the two sides that appear according to the prophecies in Revelation (Dt 30:19-20). People will be judged and sentenced to heaven or hell depending on the side they choose. This is how a generation of God's people that has sinned comes to an end and a new generation begins. Adam's, Noah's, and Moses' generations came to an end because of sin. In the same way, the work of sowing the seed that began with Jesus' first coming is brought to a close at the second coming as another

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generation disappears. Today, the new generation—the generation of the second coming—has begun (Rv 21:1).

Today, everyone seeking salvation from the Bible must understand that it is only by being a member of the promised twelve tribes of Shincheonji that a person can be one of God's chosen people. It is only by being a member of the twelve tribes that a person can attain salvation. Believers must study the Bible and think deeply about who it was that killed God's son Jesus, his disciples, and the prophets. Although they were confident that they were God's chosen people, it was the priests and elders of Israel that killed them. Since God was with Jesus, did not those who persecuted and killed Jesus belong to the devil? It was more than appropriate that Jesus called them a brood of vipers (Mt 23:33).

Since the Bible tells us that the second coming will be like the first, true believers must follow the words of God instead of the words of men. We should make God's words our teacher and our path to life. Believers whose hopes are set on heaven must join the people of heaven by believing in the creation of the twelve tribes that Jesus promised. Today, these twelve tribes have been created according to the Bible. They are made up of those who have mastered the Bible and sealed themselves with the words of life.

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12. Faith and the sin of unbelief

[Ref.: Gal 3:1-8, 11-12; Heb 11; Jas 1:15; Jude 1:6, 16-19; 2 Pt 2:4; Gn 3; Ez 28]

What is the difference between faith and unbelief? Why is unbelief a sin? Why do angels (spirits) and people (flesh) fall away from faith and refuse to believe?

Let us discover the relationship between faith and the holy spirit so that we can understand the foolishness of returning to the law and the flesh.

Everyone has physical parents. This is the case for all living things, not just humankind. This physical relationship is also not something that must be explained for us to believe it.

God and humanity have lived far apart for 6,000 years. This is why God and humans have desired to meet and get to know each other through faith. The book of Hebrews says, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," (Heb 11:1, KJV). The Bible also tells us that the law is not based on faith, and that the righteous will live by faith (Gal 3:11-12). In other words, it is not by acting according to the law that one receives the holy spirit; it is through faith. Conversely, it is unbelief that causes the holy spirit to leave a person, just like in Gn 6. When the holy spirit leaves, that person goes back to being mere flesh. Saying that a person received the holy spirit only for the holy spirit to leave again, is the same as saying that God came and left that

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person. This is why the Galatians, who began with the holy spirit and ended as mere flesh, are called foolish (Gal 3:1-8).

- [1]You foolish Galatians! Who has cast a spell on you? Before your eyes Jesus Christ was vividly portrayed as crucified! [2]The only thing I want to learn from you is this: Did you receive the Spirit by doing the works of the law or by believing what you heard? [3]Are you so foolish? Although you began with the Spirit, are you now trying to finish by human effort? [4]Have you suffered so many things for nothing? – if indeed it was for nothing. [5]Does God then give you the Spirit and work miracles among you by your doing the works of the law or by your believing what you heard? [6]Just as Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness, [7]so then, understand that those who believe are the sons of Abraham. [8]And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, proclaimed the gospel to Abraham ahead of time, saying, "All the nations will be blessed in you." (Gal 3:1-8)

- [11]Now it is clear no one is justified before God by the law, because the righteous one will live by faith. [12]But the law is not based on faith, but the one who does the works of the law will live by them. (Gal 3:11-12)

The greed of the angel and of man

James tells us, "Then when desire conceives, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is full grown, it gives birth to death," (Jas 1:15). We also know that the angels who sinned are locked up in prison (Jude 1:6; 2 Pt 2:4). In Is 14, the son of dawn (also known as the

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morning star) falls from heaven because of his greed (Is 14:12-14). That greed was the desire to become God. Not only that, Adam and Eve ate the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in Gn 3 because of their greed to become like God. The cherub from Ez 28 (one of the four living creatures or archangels) is described as a perfect seal, full of wisdom, who walked among the fiery stones of Eden. Despite having such an important position, he too sinned because of his desire to become God. People in high positions often ignore God because of a greedy desire for even more than they already have. This unbelief is a fall from faith; it is sin.

Would an angel standing before God in God's own house—within the kingdom of heaven—break away to create his own sect out of ignorance about God and his kingdom? No, this sin obviously stems from the desire to be God. The Bible tells us that the unbelievers who formed their own sects did so only in the places where Jesus and his twelve disciples received the holy spirit and carried out God's work (Rom 2:8; Gal 5:19-21; 2 Cor 12:20). Why did they not have faith? Why did they disbelieve? Why did they leave the path that leads to heaven, choosing instead the path to hell? Even the foolish people who began with the holy spirit but returned to the flesh must have had a reason for their sins. Even if they claim to have a valid reason, however, they will ultimately go to hell because of their unbelief. If they think that Jesus and his twelve disciples are not in the truth, then who is in the truth?

Today, there is a person who worked earnestly within Shincheonji, believed well, but then later fell into unbelief. He became like

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that because someone deceived him and because of greed. It is truly foolish, but it is also heartbreaking. Today, people within Shincheonji who have been cleansed by the word only to fall into unbelief will receive seven more evil spirits regardless of whether they realize it (Mt 12:43-45; Lk 11:24-26).

This is why the Bible says that it is impossible for a person who has tasted the powers of the coming age to be brought back to repentance if they fall away (Heb 6:4-6). The coming age refers to the period of Revelation's fulfillment, and these wretched people who fall away in that time should truly be pitied. The frustration within our hearts cannot be described in words. We could beg the one who left us to return or drag him kicking and screaming, but there is no way to meet or to have a conversation with him. From heaven to earth—he has travelled too far away. Even though heaven and earth are mourning, even though the mountains, rivers, grass, and trees are mourning, he is fervently opposing us and running toward hell. We are calling out with the heart of Jeremiah's Lamentations, begging him to return. Since we are created as the family of God, united as brothers, any problems we may have should be resolved through conversation. If, instead, a person leaves heaven, creates a sect, and unites with those who are evil, they will be in utter misery.

Our congregation members know that many of the angels of God's kingdom in heaven lost their faith, left, created a sect, and opposed God (Is 14:12-15). Now, through the Bible, they have witnessed within Jesus' kingdom here in the physical world (i.e., within

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the church of the twelve disciples), people losing their faith, leaving, creating sects, and opposing the work of God (Jude 1:16-19). Do we have people in such a state of unbelief within Shincheonji? We must each make every effort to prevent unbelief. Just by observing the kinds of people with whom the one who left us has united, we know whether he has become an evil person or a good person.

Over the past 2,000 years since Jesus left, the world has been shrouded in the darkness of night (Jn 9:4-5). Today, it has become a desert without a single distinguishable road to travel (i.e., without the word of God). In such a time as this, just as the sun that sets in the west rises again in the east, Shincheonji's new morning light is shining out of the darkness. Those who were wandering aimlessly in the darkness can now catch a glimpse of the light. If they run toward it, they can finally dwell there within the light. This light is the light that all creation has been eagerly awaiting. It will enter every heart and shine there eternally. There will be no more night because all nations will walk in the light (Rv 22:5). Amen.

13. Living a life of faith at the time of Jesus' second coming

[Ref.: Lk 14; Lk 18:8; Mt 13, 22, 24, 25, Rv 21:6; Mt 8:11-12; Jude]

God fulfilled the Old Testament through Jesus (Jn 19:30), but the Jews, who claimed to believe in the Old Testament, refused to believe in Jesus. God will fulfill the New Testament (Rv 21:6),

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just as he fulfilled the Old Testament. In the New Testament, Jesus asked whether he would find faith on the earth when he returns (Lk 18:8). What kind of people should we be when the New Testament is fulfilled?

When the Lord returns in the end times, the betrayers, destroyers, and savior must all appear (2 Thes 2:1-4). At that time, just like Adam, the subjects of God's kingdom (God's tabernacle) are judged, cast out, and disappear because they are deceived by Satan. After this event, many people come from the east and the west to participate in the wedding banquet of heaven (Mt 8:11-12). This is God's promise and the order of how the events of the end times will occur.

According to the prophecies, what kinds of people will be gathered by Jesus and his angels? Will people receive salvation simply by being gathered? No. Some people—the wealthy that have purchased oxen or a field and those who have recently been married—refuse to come from the beginning (Lk 14). Among the people who actually attend the wedding banquet, some carry out a proper life of faith and some are thrown out. In other scriptures these people who are cast out are referred to as goat-like believers (Mt 25:31-33, 41-45), those not wearing wedding clothes (Mt 22:11-13), people without oil in their lamps (Mt 25:1-12), the evil among the righteous (Mt 13:49-50), people like bad fish (Mt 13:47-48), prophets like Balaam (Jude 1:11; Rv 2:14), betrayers, and people like dogs and pigs that eat what they have vomited (2 Pt 2:20-22). They are the ones who have left their positions of authority in the twelve tribes, abandoned their homes,

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and created their own sects. They are opposing the work of God (Jude 1:6, 18-19). They are the deceivers (Mt 24:4-11), the people who have united with the evil kingdom of Babylon (Rv 18:2-3; Eph 2:2), and the people who eat biblical commentaries, which are the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Rv 17:1-6). They are the disobedient (Jn 3:36; Heb 4:4-6), the ones who commit adultery with the spirit of Satan (Rv 2:14-15, 20; Rv 21:8; Rv 22:15), the ones who tell lies (Rv 21:8; Rv 22:15), the people who are like stars that fall from heaven (Rv 6:13; Rv 8:10-11), and the ones who eat food sacrificed to idols (Rv 2:14-15, 20). They are those who do not believe (Rv 21:8), those who fail to keep the new covenant (1 Jn 2:4), those whose names are blotted out from the book of life (Rv 13:8; Rv 20:15), those who fail to buy gold refined in the fire, salve for their eyes, or white clothes to wear (Rv 3:17-18). They are the people who persecute others. They learned at a particular place, but decided to leave. When they return and try to unite with the people they left, they are thrown out.

The name Satan means *divider* and *opposer*. Those who have left their positions and homes within the twelve tribes of Shincheonji to deceive, cause division, create their own sects, and oppose God are antichrists that have united with the spirit of Satan. Anyone who receives this kind of person becomes a part of their group. The people mentioned above are clearly part of the prophecies, so they must appear among those who are gathered from the east and the west when Jesus returns. Although these people hear the

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news and come, they disobey the commands they are given and live their life of faith in their own way. This is why they are thrown out.

As described above, there are unrighteous people among those who are called and gathered at the time of the Lord's return. On the other hand, those who obey, keep the new covenant, and seal themselves with the word, will have their names clearly recorded in the book of life. They will become the 144,000 priests of God, and along with the great multitude dressed in white, they will rest in heaven with the Lord forever. Once more, there is a difference between superficial believers and true believers (Rom 2:28-29). Since the Bible tells us that the Lord's return will be like the time of Noah and the time of Lot, people who believe in these words of prophecy are responsible for protecting their own faith.

The world contains countless peoples, religions, denominations, churches, and pastors. Jesus, however, is just one person. To whom will he come when he returns? He comes to the pastor promised in the New Testament, the one who overcomes (Rv 3:12, 21). Therefore, believers must find the promised pastor, who fought and defeated the Nicolaitans before re-establishing the twelve tribes of God's people.

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14. Betrayal • Destruction • Salvation

[Ref.: 2 Thes 2:1-4; Is 1:1-2:4; Rv 13:1-18; Rv 14:1-5]

When do the events of betrayal, destruction, and salvation occur? Our savior Jesus will only return to the earth after the promised events of betrayal and destruction occur (2 Thes 2:1-4).

❖ [1]Now regarding the arrival of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to be with him, we ask you, brothers and sisters, [2]not to be easily shaken from your composure or disturbed by any kind of spirit or message or letter allegedly from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord is already here. [3]Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not arrive until the rebellion comes and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction. [4]He opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, and as a result he takes his seat in God's temple, displaying himself as God. (2 Thes 2:1-4)

What, then, are the true identities of the betrayers, the destroyers, and the savior? These three groups can be clearly distinguished by reading Rv 12 and 13. Believers can only learn the true identities of these groups by listening to the testimony of those who have directly witnessed the events of betrayal and destruction in the place they took place. The site of betrayal and destruction is the tabernacle of the seven golden lampstands (Rv 2-3) that was invaded by the destroyers figuratively referred to as the beast, his image, and the

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number of his name. The witnesses of the events of betrayal and destruction were victorious in that same place and came out to form the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony (Rv 15:2, 5).

Isaiah 1:1-2:4 summarizes the entire book of Isaiah and figuratively tells us about the spiritual events of betrayal and destruction, which occur at the time of the second coming. In addition to Isaiah, other Old Testament prophets also recorded the events of betrayal, destruction, and salvation. They may have used different descriptions, but the content of their prophecies is the same. Out of all of these similar prophecies, let us look at the time of the second coming through the book of Isaiah.

Approximately 2,700 years ago, the prophet Isaiah had a vision of events that would occur in the future regarding Judah and Jerusalem (Is 1:1). Isaiah's prophecies were partially fulfilled in a literal way during the time of Physical Israel, but today, they have all been spiritually fulfilled. In Isaiah, Judah and Jerusalem represent God's chosen people.

God was referring to the heaven and earth that represent the pastors and people of Israel when he said, "I raised children, I brought them up, but they have rebelled against me!" (Is 1:2-4). God lamented that his people had become corrupt and had forsaken him. The chosen people whom God loved and cared for had betrayed him. God referred to the chosen people who betrayed as people worse than beasts and as wicked offspring.

✥ [3]An ox recognizes its owner, a donkey recognizes where its owner puts its food; but Israel does not recognize me, my people do not

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understand. [4]The sinful nation is as good as dead, the people weighed down by evil deeds. They are offspring who do wrong, children who do wicked things. They have abandoned the LORD, and rejected the Holy One of Israel. They are alienated from him. (Is 1:3-4)

The chosen people that left God are brutally destroyed. God spoke of their destruction when he said, "From the soles of your feet to your head, there is no spot that is unharmed ... Your land is devastated, your cities burned with fire. Right before your eyes your crops are being destroyed by foreign invaders," (Is 1:5-7).

Among the chosen people that betrayed him, God leaves a group of remnant seed (Is 1:9). When the corrupt world of Adam was destroyed by the flood, God allowed Noah's family of eight to survive. When Sodom and Gomorrah were judged, God allowed Lot's family to survive. Those who survive at the site of destruction work with God to carry out his new work of creation.

God does not want the sacrifices, offerings, and prayers of the corrupt chosen people; he wants them to stop doing what is wicked. He wants them to do what is good and just, and to help and defend the oppressed, the orphans, and the widows (Is 1:10-17). Although their sins are like scarlet, if they come to God and plead with him, their sins can be made white as snow or wool. If, instead, they continue to reject and betray God, they will be devoured by the sword (Is 1:18-20).

Regarding Judah and Jerusalem, God said, "See how the faithful city has become a harlot! She once was full of justice; righteousness used to dwell in her—but now murderers! Your silver has

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become dross, your choice wine is diluted with water. Your rulers are rebels, companions of thieves; they all love bribes and chase after gifts," (Is 1:21-23). Saying that they have become a harlot means they are worshipping other gods (Mt 23; Rv 13). The fact that their silver has become dross and their choice wine is diluted with water means that God's word, which is pure like silver and wine, has been mixed with other words. It has become the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This is just like the commentaries about God's word that the pastors of every denomination write based on their own interpretations.

Anyone who returns to God when he judges his corrupt, degenerate chosen people will be saved (Is 1:27), but those who have forsaken the Lord and persist in their sinful rebellion will be defeated and destroyed. They will be ashamed because of the sacred trees (gentile pastors) and sacred orchards (churches) that they have chosen (Is 1:28-29).

At the time of the end, when the betrayers of Judah and Jerusalem are judged and brought to an end, Mt. Zion will be established as the most important mountain. All nations will stream to it because it houses God's temple (Is 2:1-3; Mi 4:1-2). Mount Zion symbolizes the tabernacle of the chosen people, which is created from the remnant seed of the tabernacle that betrayed. People stream to it because it is the source of God's word. Although the words of God were formerly used as swords and spears to carry out judgment, they are now used as plowshares and pruning hooks for God's new work of farming and harvesting (Is 2:4; Mi 4:3).

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Those who understand and believe in the words of prophecy described above will refuse to unite with the betrayers and destroyers and will attain salvation. Since the chosen people who made a covenant with God are deceived like Eve into betraying God, they are destroyed by the gentiles. Afterward, God works to save the chosen people who were destroyed. This is the logic of betrayal, destruction, and salvation. Today, in the time of Revelation's fulfillment, the congregation members of God's tabernacle mentioned in Rv 13 (referred to elsewhere as heaven and as the church of the seven golden lampstands in Rv 2-3) have already broken the covenant they made with God. The beast has entered their tabernacle. The congregation members have worshiped the beast and received his mark. The congregation members of the tabernacle are the betrayers and the beast represents the destroyers. In Rv 12, there is also a group who defeats the dragon's group (the beast) and throws them out of heaven. This is the point at which God's kingdom and salvation begin to exist. Again, the tabernacle of heaven, which is the church of the seven golden lampstands, betrays and is destroyed. After the destruction of the first tabernacle, those who destroyed it are also destroyed. This is when New Spiritual Israel (the 144,000 people of the twelve tribes and the great multitude dressed in white) attains salvation.

We at Shincheonji are proclaiming the testimony about the betrayers, destroyers, and savior who have all appeared today according to the Bible. I hope that those who believe in the

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prophecies mentioned here will come and see the truth, believe it, and attain salvation.

15. Discerning orthodoxy and heresy

[Ref.: Is 14:12-15; Jude 1:6, 11, 17-19; 1 Jn 2:18-19]

How are orthodoxy and heresy different? Just labeling something as either orthodox or as heresy does not make the statement true. What does the Bible say about orthodoxy and heresy? An orthodox person is someone who has united with God. A cult member or a heretic, on the other hand, is a person who has united with the devil.

Orthodoxy and heresy appeared in the physical world because they first existed in the spiritual world. An angel (spirit) left his position and home in God's spiritual kingdom and formed his own sect. Since that angel enters and works through pastors here in the physical world, his pastors lead earthly sects or cults similar to the one that the angel first formed in the spiritual world (Is 14:12-15; 2 Pt 2:4; Jude 1:6, 11, 17-19; 1 Jn 2:18-19). The first heretic to appear in the physical world was the serpent of Gn 3.

✦ [12]Look how you have fallen from the sky, O shining one, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the ground, O conqueror of the nations! [13]You said to yourself, "I will climb up to the sky. Above the stars of El I will set up my throne. I will rule on the mountain of assembly on the remote slopes of Zaphon. [14]I will climb up to the tops

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of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High!" [15]But you were brought down to Sheol, to the remote slopes of the pit. (Is 14:12-15)

- You also know that the angels who did not keep within their proper domain but abandoned their own place of residence, he has kept in eternal chains in utter darkness, locked up for the judgment of the great Day. (Jude 1:6)

- [18]Children, it is the last hour, and just as you heard that the antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have appeared. We know from this that it is the last hour. [19]They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us, because if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us. But they went out from us to demonstrate that all of them do not belong to us. (1 Jn 2:18-19)

After heresy appeared in the spiritual and physical worlds, a word for its antonym, namely orthodoxy, became necessary. An orthodox person refers to a person who has received God's seed, which is God's word. A heretic is a person who has received the devil's seed, which represents the devil's words (Lk 8:11; Mt 13:24-30, 36-43).

- [36]Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples came to him saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field." [37]He answered, "The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. [38]The field is the world and the good seed are the people of the kingdom. The weeds are the people of the evil one, [39]and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. [40]As the weeds are collected and burned

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> with fire, so it will be at the end of the age. [41]The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather from his kingdom everything that causes sin as well as all lawbreakers. [42]They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. [43]Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. The one who has ears had better listen! (Mt 13:36-43)

Adam was the very first orthodox person created by God here in the physical world, but when Adam decided to listen and follow the serpent's words, God left Adam and went to Noah. When God left him, Adam could no longer speak God's words, and he could, therefore, no longer be considered orthodox. When Adam, who was orthodox, united with the serpent, who was a heretic, it was as if the tree of life had become the tree of the knowledge of good and evil—as if God's choicest vine had become a wild vine (Is 5:2-7; Jer 2:21). Noah, on the other hand, received God's word, and in doing so, he became the new orthodoxy.

Noah's orthodoxy did not last; a flaw soon appeared in Noah's world as well. The wickedness of the Canaanites (n.b., Canaan was Noah's grandson) eventually reached a climax, and God chose Moses and then Joshua to conquer the land of Canaan. After entering the land of Canaan, however, the Israelites repeatedly disobeyed God's commands. God chose Jesus and judged Physical Israel through him. Through Jesus, God created Spiritual Israel and sowed the seed of heaven throughout the world (Mt 13:24-30; Acts 1:8).

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The seed of heaven that Jesus sowed, spread to form the new world of Christianity. Catholicism, which is now known as Roman Catholicism, split from Judaism (the religion of the Israelites) in the early days of Christianity. Protestantism was born when the Protestants, shouting about reforming a church they perceived to be corrupt, emerged from Catholicism. Together, Protestantism and Catholicism form the two main trunks of Christianity. Today, however, even Protestantism has become divided; it has splintered into hundreds of different orders and denominations. It is clear that they all consider themselves to be distinct because Protestant pastors of one denomination cannot be appointed as a pastor of a church belonging to another denomination.

To this day, just as the Jews believe that Judaism is the only orthodox religion, Catholics and Protestants each believe that they are orthodox. The countless Protestant denominations fight amongst themselves all insisting that their particular brand of Christianity is the only orthodox one. Who is it, then, that is truly orthodox?

The place to which God descends, the place that has God's word, the people who have united with God; these are the truly orthodox. The place God has left, the place without God's word, the person who has united with Satan; these are heresy. The one from the earth will speak of earthly things because he has only witnessed earthly things. The one from above sees heavenly things and will testify accordingly. The one whom God has sent will speak the words of God (Jn 3:31-34).

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> [31]The one who comes from above is superior to all. The one who is from the earth belongs to the earth and speaks about earthly things. The one who comes from heaven is superior to all. [32]He testifies about what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony. [33]The on e who has accepted his testimony has confirmed clearly that God is truthful. [34]For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for he does not give the Spirit sparingly. (Jn 3:31-34)

A person can either belong to orthodoxy or heresy depending on the type of spirit that resides within them. Jesus said, "The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life," (Jn 6:63). Thus, the type of spirit within a person can be discerned by observing his or her words and deeds in light of the Bible. Looking at Mt 7:15-20, where Jesus states that a tree is recognized by its fruit, the real cult members are people who make an occupation out of persecuting others. They have obviously received a different spirit than Jesus. Those without God's word speak only about worldly things. They curse at people who have different teachings and label them as heretics without any biblical basis. In truth, they themselves are the heretics.

Let us learn to distinguish orthodoxy and heresy through an example.

Let's say person B learned the blessed word of truth from person A. Not only is the word God (Jn 1:1), but it is also the seed of God (Lk 8:11; Mt 13:38) that is necessary for a person to become a son of God. When he began to understand the word, the secrets of God that were once hidden from his eyes were revealed to person B

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one at a time. Afterward, whenever B read anything from one of the 66 books of the Bible, he perceived the Bible's continuity and utter lack of contradiction. Since the word person B learned was really the truth, B felt like every day was again full of joy.

One day, along came person C, who asked B, "Did you know that person A is a cult member?" B listened, discredited person A within his mind, and fell away from the truth. Instead, person B should have thought more deeply. In spite of the rumor that B heard from person C about person A being a cult member, B should have used the Bible to distinguish whether the words that A spoke were from God. Even if person B rejects person A, if the words B learned from A were true, B should never have rejected the word. Unfortunately, B rejected both person A and his words.

The word is God and life, and this life is the light of men (Jn 1:1-4). This word is also the seed of God (Lk 8:11; Mt 13:38) necessary for a person to become God's son. When person B threw away God's word, it was the same as throwing away God, God's life, God's light, and God's seed. There is no way person C can teach the word of God because he does not know it. Instead, he speaks lies and curses person A in order to ostracize him. It is clear in looking at the words and actions of person C, that the spirit of Satan is within him. Did person C, who does not have the word, realize what he was doing when he said that person A was a cult member? This event is just like the time of the first coming when the Pharisees, who did not have the word, called Jesus a heretic.

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Jesus explained the four types of fields into which the seed are sown in Mt 13:18-23. The field represents a person's heart (1 Cor 3:9). Believers must at least have basic knowledge and faith regarding the seed and the field. Everyone should distinguish what type of heart they have right now. Everyone must also distinguish whether the seed sown in their heart is the good seed or the seed of weeds.

Since the 1990's, Korean Christian churches and Christian organizations have been actively conducting cult seminars. Although at one point, there were 12 million Christian believers in Korea, that number has since dropped to 8.6 million (according to a Census Bureau report from November 25, 2005).

These thoughtless cult seminars, which were led by just a few people, were not full of love, forgiveness, and blessings as Christian gatherings should be. Instead they teemed with curses, swearing, and persecution. If Christianity had sown hope and love—if Christianity had earnestly proclaimed the proper path to heaven and eternal life—the number of believers would not have fallen.

Christianity must now repent of its evil deeds. It must love its enemies, forgive them, and put Jesus' words into practice. Christianity must acknowledge as orthodox anyone who believes in God, Jesus, and his word and anyone who testifies that it is only by the precious blood of the cross that people can attain atonement and salvation. Calling this kind of believer a cult member is calling Jesus a cult leader.

The people who took the lead in persecuting and killing the prophets and apostles of past generations were neither gentiles

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nor were they unbelievers. They were not even laypeople. No, it was the pastors and elders who shouted the loudest, claiming that they were the only ones who were orthodox. We must not make the same mistake today. Again, anyone who falsely curses and persecutes an innocent person is a heretic controlled by an evil spirit, an enemy of God.

What, then, is the standard that distinguishes orthodoxy from heresy? People frequently think a given church is orthodox if it has a long tradition and if other churches acknowledge it. It is the Bible, however, that should be the only standard for judging what is orthodox from what is heresy, what is true from what is false. We cannot use the standards and measuring instruments of men to discern the truth (Gal 1:10-12).

As mentioned above, the place where God resides, the place from which God's word of revelation comes, should be considered true orthodoxy. If, however, God leaves a place, it is transformed from orthodoxy into heresy. Even a brand new denomination can be orthodox if God dwells there and if it has God's word. Instead of welcoming Jesus at the time of the first coming, the chosen people killed Jesus and falsely accused his followers of being a cult (Acts 24:5). This is why Jesus asked whether he would find faith on this earth when he returns (Lk 18:8). Jesus also said that the destroyers would stand in the holy place and that the sun, moon, and stars would turn dark and fall (Mt 24:15, 29). Revelation mentions that, at the second coming (the end times), Satan (Babylon) will have deceived all nations (Rv 18:1-3). If this is true, will there

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be anyone who is orthodox at that time? Anyone who claims to be orthodox without biblical support for their claim is lying to hide their true identity.

When Jesus returns, he will judge the previous generation and bring it to an end (Rv 6). Then, he will create the twelve tribes of New Spiritual Israel and live with them (Rv 7, 14). New Spiritual Israel is God's new kingdom, which is created by gathering the wheat-like believers harvested from the world of Christianity. Since the previous generation is judged and is disappearing at the time of New Spiritual Israel, it is obviously wrong to claim that it is still orthodox.

We at Shincheonji have fought and defeated the devil with the word of truth. Just as the Bible promises, we have created the twelve tribes (Rv 7). The churches of the world are teaching the rules and traditions of men, but we at Shincheonji have received and are preaching the opened word of revelation (Rv 10, 14:1-6). Anyone who is able to discern the place where God dwells using the Bible should know the truth.

The churches of this world cannot even begin to explain the words of Revelation or testify about their physical fulfillment. This is because Jesus is the only person who broke the seven seals of the sealed book (Rv 5:1-5, 6:1-8:1), and because John is the only person to whom Jesus gave and taught the words of the book that was once sealed. Through an angel, John witnessed the prophecies recorded in the book along with their physical fulfillment. Now, he is the one who proclaims the truth to all believers (Rv 10).

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The man named Apostle John who lived and died roughly 2,000 years ago does not come back and fulfill the events he recorded in the book of Revelation. These events are fulfilled by a single pastor who comes in the position of Apostle John. All believers must find this pastor. The pastor who fulfills the mission of John recorded in Revelation is the only orthodox pastor because Jesus promised to send him in the end times (Rv 1:2, 22:16).

Today, as Christianity faces the end times, I hope that all believers will be able to find the twelve tribes as well as the church and pastor promised by Jesus. Since this church and pastor are the only ones who are truly orthodox, it is through them that people can attain salvation. Jesus appeared in the temple of John the Baptist (Mt 3:13-17), who played the role of the lampstand that prepares the way. In the same way, today, Jesus' promised pastor must appear at the tabernacle of the seven messengers because they are the ones who carry out the work of the lampstand that prepares the way. Once there, this promised pastor fights and overcomes the Nicolaitans (Rv 1:9-20; Rv 3:12, 21; Rv 12:5).

16. The physical realities of spiritual light and darkness

[Ref.: Jn 1:1-5, 12:46, 8:12, 9:4-5; 1 Thes 5:1-9]

What are the physical realities of the light and darkness mentioned in the Bible? They refer to wisdom and ignorance, respectively, as well as to the people who possess and who lack the words of life.

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Light and darkness are mentioned from the very first day of the creation of heaven and earth in Gn 1:1-5. Jeremiah 4:23 refers to Judah and Jerusalem, which were destroyed, as darkness without even a hint of light. The Bible also says that Jesus came as the light of the world and shone the light on those dwelling in darkness (Jn 12:46; Is 9:2).

- I have come as a light into the world, so that everyone who believes in me should not remain in darkness. (Jn 12:46)

- The people walking in darkness see a bright light; light shines on those who live in a land of deep darkness. (Is 9:2)

If this is true, let us find out more about the physical realities of the light and darkness.

Physical light and darkness in the natural world are used figuratively in the Bible to describe something spiritual. They are not meant to be understood literally. Light represents the word of life and a person with that word. According to Jn 1:1-5, the word is God, everything was created by the word, and the word is life and light.

Since Jesus is the word that became flesh and came to us (Jn 1:14), he is the physical reality of the light (Jn 8:12). Jesus said he came into the world as a light because he brought the word of truth (Jn 12:46).

- [1]In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was fully God. [2]The Word was with God in the beginning. [3]All things were created by him, and apart from him not one thing was created that has been created. [4]In him was life, and the life was

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the light of mankind. [5]And the light shines on in the darkness, but the darkness has not mastered it. (Jn 1:1-5)

Darkness, on the other hand, refers to a person who lacks God's word. John 1:5 says, "And the light shines on in the darkness, but the darkness has not mastered it." This means that although the word of truth was conveyed to them, people were too ignorant to understand it.

The first epistle of John refers to Jesus as the word of life, which was there since the beginning (1 Jn 1:1-2). Since God is the word, and Jesus was born of the seed of the word, Jesus is also the word. Think of a fraction, in which the numerator is a part of the denominator. If God is the denominator, Jesus is the numerator. If the denominator is the word, then the numerator must also be the word. If the denominator is life, then the numerator is also life. If the denominator is light, then the numerator is also light. In the same way, because Jesus is a light, a person who has the word of Jesus will be the same light as Jesus. This person will never dwell in darkness (Jn 8:12). Jesus also said that God's word is God's seed (Lk 8:11). If we are born again by this imperishable seed (1 Pt 1:23), we too can become sons of God and God's numerators. We become the same imperishable life and light as God and Jesus.

✥ [1]This is what we proclaim to you: what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and our hands have touched (concerning the word of life – [2]and the life was revealed, and we have seen and testify and announce to

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you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us). (1 Jn 1:1-2)

- Then Jesus spoke out again, "I am the light of the world. The one who follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (Jn 8:12)

Because Jesus himself is the physical reality of the light, he said that it was daytime while he was in the world, but that night would come when he left (Jn 9:4-5). Paul's first epistle to the Thessalonians mentions the children of night and darkness and also the children of day and light (1 Thes 5:4-8). It is easy and very common to think that the children of light represent believers and that the children of darkness represent unbelievers. These children of darkness, however, are not just unbelievers; they include believers who are trying to live their lives of faith without understanding God's word. The children of light are the believers who have received and sealed God's word in their hearts. The disciples, who received Jesus' words, were children of light. The Jews, on the other hand, said they believed in God but rejected Jesus' words. Since they rejected the light, they were the children of darkness and were no different from gentiles. Out of these two kinds of believers, it is only the children of light who receive salvation.

- [4]But you, brothers and sisters, are not in the darkness for the day to overtake you like a thief would. [5]For you all are sons of the light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of the darkness. [6]So then we must not sleep as the rest, but must stay alert and sober.

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> [7]For those who sleep, sleep at night and those who get drunk are drunk at night. [8]But since we are of the day, we must stay sober by putting on the breastplate of faith and love and as a helmet our hope for salvation. (1 Thes 5:4-8)

It is important to note that the creation of heaven and earth in Gn 1 began with a light. The work of Jesus at the first coming began after John the Baptist played the role of a lamp. The events of Revelation that are fulfilled at the time of the second coming also begin with the work of the lampstand, which is carried out by the seven messengers referred to as the seven stars.

God's word must be the foundation of faith. Because the word is both God and Jesus, people who follow the word are led by God and Jesus. This is why believers must think of the word as the path that leads to heaven, as our teacher, and as life itself.

Furthermore, although it is important to realize that God, Jesus, and the word are light and life, it is also important we ourselves become the word, the light, and the life. That is only possible when we are born of the seed of the word.

God's word is compared to light because light is a source of life for all creation. In the same way that light gives life to all things, God's word gives life to our souls and revives them. Just as living organisms cannot live without light, our souls cannot live without God's word. This is why God's word is light and life to us (Jn 1:1-5). Since Jesus had the word of truth within him, he became the light and the life. We, too, must receive Jesus' words and become sources of light and life in this dark world.

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In Lk 18:8, Jesus asked, "When the Son of Man returns, will he find faith on this earth?" He also said several times that he would come like a thief in the night at the second coming, but that the day of the Lord would not come like a thief for the children of light. Then, he urged his followers to stay awake and alert (1 Thes 5:1-9). The person who lights the lamp of the word and stays awake will be able to meet the Lord in the second coming (Mt 25:1-13).

Since Jesus was both the light and the path, when he left it was as if the sun had set in the west, plunging the whole world into darkness (Jn 9:4-5). Without a clear vision of the path, the world became a desert without a single road to follow. When Jesus (i.e., the word, the light, and the path) returns to this world in the second coming, it is as if the sun, which had set in the west, rises again in the east after a long, hard night (approximately 2,000 years). This is when people will be able to see the light again. This is how the light is given to those who are stumbling about in the midst of a long, dark night. This is how a path appears to those who are wandering around in a road-less desert. According to Jn 14:20, we must unite with Jesus, who is the word. We must become the light for those who are in darkness, and the path for those who are lost. Let us become the living water for the hearts of those who have been thirsty for 2,000 years, and for the many people who see our light and run on our path. Amen.

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17. The physical realities of the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil

[Ref.: Gn 2:9, 2:17, 3:22; Rv 22:1-2; Jn 15:1-8; Dn 4:20-22]

What are the physical realities of the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? These are the two types of spirits and the two types of pastors. The tree of life represents a pastor who belongs to God and the spirit that works through that pastor. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil represents a pastor who belongs to Satan and the spirit that works through that pastor. In addition, the fruit of the tree of life represents the word of God, and the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil represents the teachings of Satan (the serpent). Fruit also refer to the congregation members who are born through the word of God and the congregation members who are born through the teachings of Satan (Jas 1:18; Mt 7:15-20).

It is not an exaggeration to say that all of humanity has been held in slavery and death for 6,000 years since the time of Adam because of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and because of the serpent. Nevertheless, until today, no one was able to know the physical reality and fulfillment of the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

God spoke figuratively to hide the true reality of the secrets of heaven until the time he had appointed (Ps 78:2; Mt 13:34-35).

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One of these secrets is the secret of the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

If the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was not in the Garden of Eden, then humanity would not have been made subject to death. Who planted the tree of the knowledge of good and evil that caused this problem?

The answer can be found in the words of Jesus, who was one with God. Using parables, Jesus revealed secrets that had been hidden since the creation of the world. In Mt 13:24-25, Jesus told a parable about a man who sowed good seed in his field and an enemy that came and sowed weeds among the wheat before going away. Here, the man represents Jesus, the "Son of Man" (Mt 13:37). The man's field is the church of Jesus, the good seed is the word of God, the enemy is the devil, and the weeds are Satan's words. Clearly, Satan was the one who sowed the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden.

The birth of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is directly related to the appearance of Satan. According to Is 14:12-15 and Ez 28, Satan used to be an archangel in the spiritual world of the kingdom of God. Satan, however, failed to maintain his position of authority. Out of greed and a desire to become as great as God, Satan abandoned his home, taking many other angels with him to form a sect.

Unfortunately, the problem did not end there. Satan came down to people in the physical world. Satan masquerades as an angel of light to deceive and manipulate people (2 Cor 11:13-15).

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Anyone whom the spirit of Satan enters becomes a tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This is how the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden was created. The spirit that works within the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is the spirit of the devil.

God told Adam that he was free to eat from any tree in the garden except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God told Adam that if he ate of that tree he would surely die (Gn 2:17). Adam and Eve, however, were easily deceived by the serpent. They ignored God's warning and ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gn 3:6).

Let us learn a few more details about the physical realities of these two trees.

Jesus said he is the way, the truth, and the life (Jn 14:6). He also said he is the true vine (Jn 15:1). Together these two verses mean that Jesus is the tree of life. In Mt 13:31-32, Jesus told a parable regarding the kingdom of heaven, "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest garden plant and becomes a tree, so that the wild birds come and nest in its branches." In this parable, the bird refers to the holy spirit. The holy spirit descended like a dove upon Jesus because he was the tree of life (Mt 3:16).

On the other hand, according to Dn 4:20-22, God called King Nebuchadnezzar a large tree. This tree grew large and strong, with its top reaching the sky. It was visible in all the land, with attractive

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foliage and abundant fruit. It provided food and shelter for all; its branches were nesting places for the birds of the sky. Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom, was a gentile nation that invaded and took over Israel during the time of the Old Testament. If a gentile king who destroyed God's chosen people is symbolized by a tree, then he is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the spirits that perch upon this tree are evil spirits. Again, the person and organization where evil spirits dwell are symbolized by the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and by hell. According to Rv 18:2, the home of demons is figuratively referred to as Babylon.

If Jesus, who united with the holy spirit, is the true vine, a gentile pastor, who has united with an evil spirit, is the wild vine. In Is 5:1-2, God told a parable about when he planted his beloved vineyard with the choicest of cultivated vines. The vineyard, however, yielded only wild grapes. This is a figurative description of the way in which God's chosen people have united with the gentiles.

If Jesus' words are the wine made from the fruit of the true vine, then the words of a gentile pastor are the wine of adulteries made from the fruit of the wild vine (Rv 17:1-5). The words of those who go against God are figuratively referred to as the deadly poison of cobras (Dt 32:31-33). Those words are like the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil that kill people's spirits.

The fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which the serpent in the Garden of Eden told Eve to eat, represented the serpent's teachings. The Garden of Eden was the tabernacle God created for Adam. Adam was the field where God sowed

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his word (seed). The serpent in the Garden of Eden was a person used by Satan's spirit, and therefore, that person was the true physical reality of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

What, then, was the Garden of Eden's tree of life? Adam was a tree of life because he received the word of God, but the tree of life also refers to the people who heard the word of God from Adam. When God told Adam he was free to eat from any tree in the garden except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, it meant that Adam could listen to and believe the words of any people whose words were the same as the words of God.

Let us learn about the wine of adulteries that is related to the wild wine. In Rv 17-18, a prostitute called Babylon has caused the downfall of all nations using the wine of adulteries. This prostitute was in the desert and was sitting on the beast with seven heads and ten horns that devoured the tabernacle of the chosen people in Rv 13. The prostitute and the beast are the physical bodies (i.e., people) that the dragon (Satan) is using at the end of the Christian world.

Who is the prostitute whose name is Babylon and what is her wine of adulteries that caused all nations to fall?

Babylon the prostitute is a pastor who, like Eve, left God and forged a relationship with Satan. This pastor received Satan's spirit, married him (Rv 18:23), and gave birth to Satan's spiritual children through Satan's seed. This is why the prostitute is called the mother of prostitutes and of the abominations of the earth in Rv 17:5. Just as God's seed are his words (Lk 8:11), the devil's seed are his words.

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In addition, the wine of adulteries represents the false teachings of the prostitute, who committed adultery with Satan.

According to Dn 5:1-4, King Belshazzar of the gentile nation of Babylon gave a great banquet and drank from the golden goblets that his father Nebuchadnezzar had stolen from the temple in Jerusalem. In the same way, Babylon the prostitute also drinks the maddening wine of her adulteries from a golden goblet (Rv 17:1-5). What is this golden goblet?

The golden goblet symbolizes the Bible, which records the word of God that, just like gold, will never change. The prostitute is teaching the Bible through her own interpretations. She provides pastors with her interpretations of the Bible, so that they can teach them to others. This is how all the nations drink the maddening wine of her adulteries (Rv 17:2). The prostitute's golden goblet is not the pure word of God; it is a commentary Bible, which includes all kinds of false doctrines and interpretations regarding God's word. The true pastor, however, receives, eats, and testifies about the book that Jesus opened and revealed (Rv 10).

In summary, there were two kinds of trees in the Garden of Eden. The tree of life represents a person who belongs to God and through whom a holy spirit is working. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil represents a person who belongs to Satan and through whom an evil spirit is working. The fruit of the tree of life are the words of the holy spirit, and the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil are the words of an evil spirit. Because it is the fruit that holds the seed, the words a person first received

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are the words they have stored in their heart. Thus, it is the fruit that a person chooses to eat that determines the type of tree he or she becomes. Choosing which fruit to eat is choosing whether we receive the teachings of the holy spirit or the teachings of an evil spirit. This is the critical fork in the road that leads either to life or to death. All believers should use the Bible to discern the type of seed they have received.

18. The true vine and the wild vine

[Ref.: Jn 15:1-8; Is 5:1-7; Rv 18:2-3, 23; Dt 32:32-33; Rv 17:1-5]

What are the true vine and the wild vine, and how are their physical realities and defining characteristics different? These two types of grape trees actually represent people. Wine comes from grapes, and grapes come from vines.

Jesus called himself the true vine and his disciples branches. Jesus even told his disciples that if they remained in him, they would bear much fruit (Jn 15:1-5). This type of figurative language can also be found in the dream of the gentile King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. God interpreted the king's dream and told Daniel that the large tree the king saw was King Nebuchadnezzar himself (Dn 4:20-22). According to Rv 17-18, Babylon is the kingdom of the beast with the seven heads and ten horns that belongs to the prostitute. Babylon was the organization that devoured the chosen people

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and Jerusalem. Babylon is the home of demons, the haunt of evil spirits, and the resting place for every unclean bird (Rv 17:5, 18:2).

- [1]"I am the true vine and my Father is the gardener. ... [5]I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me – and I in him – bears much fruit, because apart from me you can accomplish nothing. (Jn 15:1-5)

- [20]The tree that you saw that grew large and strong, whose top reached to the sky, and which could be seen in all the land, [21]whose foliage was attractive and its fruit plentiful, and from which there was food available for all, under whose branches wild animals used to live, and in whose branches birds of the sky used to nest – [22]it is you, O king! For you have become great and strong. Your greatness is such that it reaches to heaven, and your authority to the ends of the earth. (Dn 4:20-22)

If Jesus is a tree onto which the holy sprit descends like a bird, then King Nebuchadnezzar is a tree in which an evil spirit nests. Between these two trees, who is the tree of life and who is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? The tree of life is Jesus, who is life, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is the gentile King Nebuchadnezzar, who destroyed God's chosen people.

Jesus told a parable in Mt 13 saying that the kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. Later, Satan came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away (Mt 13:24-26). In addition, God compared the Israelites, who united with the gentiles, to the choicest vines that yielded wild grapes (Is 5:2, 6-7).

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In response, God commanded the clouds not to rain on his vines (Is 5:6).

- [24]He presented them with another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a person who sowed good seed in his field. [25]But while everyone was sleeping, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. [26]When the plants sprouted and bore grain, then the weeds also appeared." (Mt 13:24-26)

- [2]He built a hedge around it, removed its stones, and planted a vine. He built a tower in the middle of it, and constructed a winepress. He waited for it to produce edible grapes, but it produced sour ones instead. [6]I will make it a wasteland; no one will prune its vines or hoe its ground, and thorns and briers will grow there. I will order the clouds not to drop any rain on it. [7]Indeed Israel is the vineyard of the LORD who commands armies, the people of Judah are the cultivated place in which he took delight. He waited for justice, but look what he got – disobedience! He waited for fairness, but look what he got – cries for help! (Is 5:2, 6-7)

If Jesus, as the true pastor, can call himself the true vine, then the gentile King Nebuchadnezzar is symbolized by the wild vine. This wild vine is also the wild serpent that deceived Eve (Gn 3:1). According to Dt 32:32-33, God spoke figuratively about his enemies, referring to them as the vines of Sodom and Gomorrah that produce grapes filled with poison. He said that their wine is the deadly poison of cobras. This is similar to when Jesus referred to the Sadducees and Pharisees as a brood of vipers (Mt 12:34, 23:33).

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They, too, were figurative wild vines. If the words of the king of Babylon are the wild wine, which is the wine of adulteries from the evil spirits (Rv 17:1-5), then the words of Jesus are the true wine, which is the wine of the holy spirit. The true vine and the wild vine each refer, respectively, to the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The words that come from each tree are the words of either the holy spirit or the evil spirit.

The words of the holy spirit are life and light, while the words of the evil spirit are wicked and dark. The holy spirit is with the pastor God chooses and appoints, and the evil spirits are with the pastors they choose and appoint. The true identities of these two types of pastors can be distinguished by looking at their actions when they appear at the place prophesied in the Bible.

- [32]For their vine is from the stock of Sodom, and from the fields of Gomorrah. Their grapes contain venom, their clusters of grapes are bitter. [33]Their wine is snakes' poison, the deadly venom of cobras. (Dt 32:32-33)

- Offspring of vipers! How are you able to say anything good, since you are evil? For the mouth speaks from what fills the heart. (Mt 12:34)

- You snakes, you offspring of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell? (Mt 23:33)

What is the true identity of the serpent, which is the physical reality of the wild vine today? The serpents (the teachers of the law and the Pharisees) sat in the temple of Jerusalem at the time of

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John the Baptist during Jesus' first coming roughly 2,000 years ago. In the same way, today, according to the prophecies of Rv 2-3, Rv 13, and Rv 12, the serpent entered the tabernacle of the seven stars (heaven), fought against its congregation members, and defeated them. The serpent ruled over them and marked their foreheads and right hands with the mark of the beast. This is the physical reality of today's serpent. The origin of the beast is the wild vine and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The teachings and doctrines from their mouths are the wine of adulteries given by the serpent (Satan). Since the supposedly orthodox teachings of the serpent are actually its venom—the deadly poison of cobras—the spirit of anyone who receives this word will surely die (Mt 12:34-37).

According to Revelation, the inhabitants of the earth are intoxicated (Rv 17:1-5) and all nations have fallen because of the maddening wine of adulteries (Rv 18:2-3, 23). What is this maddening wine of adulteries? Is it different from the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil that killed Adam and Eve?

As discussed above, figuratively speaking, a vine represents a pastor, its branches are his disciples, and its fruit are both the pastor's words and the congregation members that the pastor has evangelized. If this is the case, the wine made from these spiritual grapes also represents the pastor's words.

The maddening wine of adulteries symbolizes the teachings people receive as they commit adultery with Satan instead of uniting with Jesus, their true bridegroom. Satan's words are the poisonous

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venom of serpents and the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil that kill people's spirits.

The word of truth comes from the pastor of God and lies come from the pastor of Satan. The word of God contains life, but the word of Satan kills the spirit of anyone who receives it because it is full of wickedness.

- [1]Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke to me. "Come," he said, "I will show you the condemnation and punishment of the great prostitute who sits on many waters, [2]with whom the kings of the earth committed sexual immorality and the earth's inhabitants got drunk with the wine of her immorality." [3]So he carried me away in the Spirit to a wilderness, and there I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was full of blasphemous names and had seven heads and ten horns. [4]Now the woman was dressed in purple and scarlet clothing, and adorned with gold, precious stones, and pearls. She held in her hand a golden cup filled with detestable things and unclean things from her sexual immorality. [5]On her forehead was written a name, a mystery: "Babylon the Great, the Mother of prostitutes and of the detestable things of the earth." (Rv 17:1-5)

- [2]He shouted with a powerful voice: "Fallen, fallen, is Babylon the great! She has become a lair for demons, a haunt for every unclean spirit, a haunt for every unclean bird, a haunt for every unclean and detested beast. [3]For all the nations have fallen from the wine of her immoral passion, and the kings of the earth have committed sexual

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immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have gotten rich from the power of her sensual behavior." (Rv 18:2-3)

Just as a tree is recognized by its fruit (Mt 7:15-20), it is possible to distinguish whether a pastor belongs to God or to Satan by listening to his words and seeing his actions. For example, those who fight against and defeat the believers in God's tabernacle—those who force the congregation members to worship them in the time of Revelation—they are the embodiment of Satan (Rv 13). Those who are sealed with the name of God and Jesus are the people that belong to God (Rv 14). If these two types of people are referred to as trees, they are the wild vines and the true vines, respectively. The Bible says that those who eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil will die, but those who eat from the tree of life will live forever (Gn 2:17, 3:22). For this reason we can say that these two types of people are also trees of the knowledge of good and evil and trees of life.

The events of Revelation, which can also be thought of as the events when Christianity comes to an end, take place at the tabernacle of the seven messengers. These people began in Jesus' right hand and acted as the lampstands that prepared the way. Satan's (the dragon's) group, the Nicolaitans, are the same as the beast with seven heads and ten horns that invades the tabernacle, fights against and defeats its congregation members, and takes them as its own people (Rv 13). This group of the dragon (i.e., the beast) is the wild serpent (Gn 3) and the wild vine (Rv 17). The congregation members of the tabernacle, by uniting with the serpent, are

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transformed into wicked branches of the gentile vine that bear wild grapes. This happens despite God's planting them as special vines of the very best stock (Jer 2:21). This is when the son of the woman clothed with the sun, moon, and stars, along with his brothers and the angels of heaven, fights against the group of the dragon. By overcoming them, the dragon's group is thrown out. It is from this point that God's salvation and eternal kingdom begin to exist (Rv 12). At the time of the first coming, John the Baptist and Jesus belonged to God's group, the true vine. The teachers of the law and the Pharisees, on the other hand, belonged to the serpent's group, the wild beast, which was the wild vine.

In the same way, today, at the time of the second coming, the tabernacle of Rv 13 is the vineyard of God, and the beast who invades it is the wild vine. The one who fights and overcomes the beast (i.e., the wild vine) is himself the true vine. Today, we in Shincheonji testify about the physical fulfillment of the prophecies of Revelation.

Believers should not be like Eve by unconditionally receiving and eating the words of their pastors. They should question them and confirm that they are words spoken according to the Bible. They should use the Bible to distinguish the group to which their pastor belongs. The Bible divides pastors into two groups, which are figuratively referred to as two kinds of trees—the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Let us become people who use the Bible to distinguish these two groups so that we can receive salvation. According to Rv 2-3, the one who fought

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against and overcame the Nicolaitans is the one who belongs to God. Because this person overcame he becomes Israel and creates the the twelve tribes of New Spiritual Israel. These are the 144,000 priests and the great multitude clothed in white (Rv 7, 14). Anyone who understands that the prophecies of the Bible have been fulfilled will believe this (Jn 14:29).

19. Signs of the end of the age

[Ref.: Mt 24-25; Rv 1-22]

The disciples asked Jesus, "What will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" (Mt 24:3). When and where will the signs of the end of the age that Jesus gave his disciples appear?

God and Jesus came to the earth according to the Old Testament, fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies, and then testified about that fulfillment (Jn 19:30). In addition, before he left Jesus told his disciples that he would return and gave them the signs of his second coming (Jn 14:2-3). At that time, Jesus came according to the Old Testament prophecies (Is 9:1-2) and began to proclaim the gospel of truth in Galilee (Mt 4:12-17). Jesus arrived at Bethphage on the Mount of Olives near Jerusalem, and according to prophecy (Zec 9:9-10), he rode a foal of a donkey into Jerusalem (Mt 21:1-11). Most of the Israelites, however, refused to receive Jesus (Jn 1:11). God's son Jesus prophesied to the members of Physical Israel who refused to receive him, saying, "I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a people who will produce its

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fruit," (Mt 21:41-43). Moreover, Jesus prophesied that upon his return, he would hold a wedding banquet after preparing his "oxen and fatted beasts"[1] and gathering the guests (Mt 22:1-14).

Jesus told the people of Jerusalem who rejected him, "You will not see me again until you say 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord,'" (Mt 23:39). After hearing this, his thoughtless disciples showed him the buildings of Jerusalem without regard for the condition of Jesus' heart. Jesus told them that no single stone would be left on another and that every one would be thrown down. When the disciples heard these words of Jesus, they asked him when these events would take place and what the signs of his coming and of the end of age would be (Mt 24:1-3).

- For I tell you, you will not see me from now until you say, "Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!" (Mt 23:39)

- [1]Now as Jesus was going out of the temple courts and walking away, his disciples came to show him the temple buildings. [2]And he said to them, "Do you see all these things? I tell you the truth, not one stone will be left on another. All will be torn down!" [3]As he was sitting on the Mount of Olives, his disciples came to him privately and said, "Tell us, when will these things happen? And what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" (Mt 24:1-3)

The very first words of Jesus' response were "Watch out that no one misleads you," (Mt 24:4-5). The end of the age is the time when

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1 – The Korean Bible mentions the cow and fattened beast that are slaughtered for the banquet. The DARBY and BBE translations are similar.

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the gospel of heaven that Jesus proclaimed is being proclaimed throughout the whole world. At that time, two nations (good and evil) will rise and fight against one another. Because of the increase of wickedness in the world, the only people who are saved will be those who flee to the mountains upon seeing the abomination that causes desolation standing in the holy place (Mt 24:6-16). At that time, false christs and false prophets will appear to deceive, if possible, even the elect. Therefore, all church members should be careful not to be deceived (Mt 24:23-26). In the time of the first coming, it was the teachers of the law and the Pharisees (Mt 23:1-2) who sat in the holy place (Mt 24:15). They invaded the holy place and rid it of both John the Baptist and Zechariah, the priest of Jerusalem. Jesus called the teachers of the law and the Pharisees serpents (Mt 23:29-36) because they were just like the serpent that deceived Eve in the Garden of Eden.

✥ [4]Jesus answered them, "Watch out that no one misleads you. [5]For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will mislead many. [6]You will hear of wars and rumors of wars. Make sure that you are not alarmed, for this must happen, but the end is still to come. ... [15]So when you see the abomination of desolation – spoken about by Daniel the prophet – standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), [16]then those in Judea must flee to the mountains. ... [24]For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. [25]Remember, I have told you ahead of time. [26]So then, if

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someone says to you, 'Look, he is in the wilderness,' do not go out, or 'Look, he is in the inner rooms,' do not believe him." (Mt 24:4-26)

In the midst of these wars and distress, the chosen people—figuratively referred to as the sun, moon, and stars—fall from heaven to earth (Mt 24:29); the people who belonged to heaven become the people of the earth. After beginning with the holy spirit, they return to the flesh (Gal 3:3). When the sun, moon, and stars fall, the world is plunged into the darkness of night. This happens according to the words of Jesus, who said that the Lord's return would take place after war, betrayal, and destruction (Mt 24:6-21; 2 Thes 2:1-3). When the world has turned to night, Jesus, who is light, will appear as a spirit with his angels at the tabernacle of heaven that went dark. The angels will blow their trumpets to announce that the events of this chapter have been fulfilled. They will come like a thief to harvest the wheat-like believers who are awake and alert. The angels will bring them from the east, west, north, and south to Mt. Zion (Mt 24:29-31; Rv 14:14-16). The believers who are harvested will be cared for, they will be fed the proper food at the proper time, and they will learn the new song, which represents the physical fulfillment of the New Testament (Mt 24:45-47; Rv 14:1-5).

✥ [1]Now regarding the arrival of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to be with him, we ask you, brothers and sisters, [2]not to be easily shaken from your composure or disturbed by any kind of spirit or message or letter allegedly from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord is already here. [3]Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day

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will not arrive until the rebellion comes and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction. (2 Thes 2:1-3)

✥ [29]Immediately after the suffering of those days, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven will be shaken. [30]Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and all the tribes of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man arriving on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. [31]And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet blast, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. (Mt 24:29-31)

The end of the age will be like the time of Noah when no one recognized that God was going to destroy the world with the flood (Lk 17:26-27). People should, therefore, be awake through the word in order to be saved at the time of the harvest instead of being destroyed (Mt 24:40-44, 25:1-13). At the time of the Lord's return, there will be inward believers like sheep and outward believers like goats. At that time, only the inward believers like sheep will enter the kingdom of heaven that descends to the earth with the Lord (Mt 25:31-34).

Up to this point we have examined the things Jesus said about the signs of the end of the age that occur at the time of the second coming. The prophecies mention things like the fall of the temple, wars and rumors of wars, the events of betrayal and destruction, and the harvest of salvation. Believers living at the end of the age should read and understand the words of promise so they

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can believe and obey them. In doing so, believers will be able to achieve their hopes.

Shincheonji has seen the physical fulfillment of the signs of the end of the age that Jesus promised. They have all appeared according to the prophecies in the Bible, and we are testifying about them.

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20. Distinguishing the times

[Ref.: Mt 23, 24; Gn 7; Rv 13, 18; Lk 18:8; Dt 7]

Today, at the time of the Lord's second coming, what does it mean for believers to distinguish the times?

Jesus' disciples asked him, "What will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" (Mt 24:3). The rest of Mt 24, which includes many prophecies, is Jesus' answer to this question. Jesus spoke about the signs of the end of age saying, "Learn this parable from the fig tree: Whenever its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also you, when you see all these things, know that he is near, right at the door. I tell you the truth, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away," (Mt 24:32-35).

From Adam's generation to Revelation's fulfillment, every time one generation passed away and another replaced it there was a certain time when the two generations overlapped. Let us examine the events that took place in these times of overlap.

The overlap of Adam's world with Noah's world

After telling Noah of his plan to destroy the corrupt world of Adam with a flood, God told Noah to build an ark because he wanted to establish the world of Noah (Gn 6:13-22). Noah built the ark according to God's command and boldly told people of God's plan to destroy the heavens and the earth with a flood. The only people who believed Noah's warnings, however, were his own

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family. Thus, although God accomplished his plan by destroying Adam's world with a flood, he allowed Noah's family of eight to survive, and through them he started a new generation (Gn 7).

The overlap of Canaan's world with Moses' world

Noah's world began with those who came out of the ark. Noah's world sinned just like Adam's world, and because of its sin, Canaan, the son of Ham, was cursed (Gn 9:25-27). God brought Moses, who was a descendant of Abraham, out of Egypt and told him to conquer and rule over the land of Canaan. Moses led the Israelites from Egypt to the Jordan River on the edge of the land of Canaan. From there, it was Joshua who led the people into Canaan, conquered it, and ruled over Canaan's world.

Important points about the overlap of the periods of the Old Testament and the New Testament

God has been trying to tell his people many things through the Bible (the Old and New Testaments). Most importantly, believers must understand the prophecies that refer to the time in which they live. The Old Testament prophecies are recorded from Psalms to Malachi, and the New Testament prophecies are recorded from Matthew to Revelation. Simply stated, the prophecies concern the destruction of the chosen people that comes as a consequence of their betrayal. After they are destroyed, the promised pastor comes to carry out the work of salvation. This savior (the promised pastor) does not come before the events of the chosen people's betrayal and subsequent destruction.

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For both the people who sought salvation in the Old Testament and the people seeking salvation in the New Testament, the process and logic of salvation are the same. One generation must pass away for another generation to begin. The process of salvation that took place at the first coming takes place again at the time of the second coming. Therefore, to attain salvation believers must know and believe in the true identities of the chosen people who are destroyed because of their betrayal, the enemies of God who destroy them, and the promised pastor who appears afterward as the savior.

The Bible says in regard to the second coming, which is the end of the age, that the savior will come to fulfill the New Testament prophecies after all the nations of the world have been deceived by Satan, have betrayed God, and have been destroyed (Rv 18:2-3; 2 Thes 2:1-4; Rv 21:6). People insisting without reservation that they have already been saved and have received the holy spirit as well as people who claim to be orthodox while persecuting others as cults are speaking nothing but lies. The ideology of Calvinism, which does not recognize Revelation, is the ideology of Satan, and as such, goes against the will of God and Jesus. People use the weapon of Satan when they label a person or a group of people as either orthodox or heretical based on the teachings of their own denomination.

Those who want to receive salvation should know and believe the true identities of the betrayers, the destroyers, and the savior. This is the work of distinguishing the times.

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The overlap of the world of Physical Israel with the world of Spiritual Israel

Physical Israel (i.e., the Israel born of Abraham) conquered the land of Canaan but worshiped gentile gods at the time of Solomon. As a result, it was divided into North Israel, which had eleven tribes, and South Israel, which had one tribe (1 Kgs 11). The North (i.e., Israel proper) immediately became a gentile nation, and the South (i.e., Judah and Jerusalem) was handed over to Satan after the reign of King Solomon. When both Israel and Judah became possessions of gentile gods, they were corrupted just like the worlds of Adam, Noah, and Canaan.

Since the chosen people of Israel, who made the exodus from Egypt, were corrupted because of Solomon, God sent the Old Testament prophets to prophesy about the future. The Psalms and the writings of Isaiah and the other Old Testament prophets are these prophecies of God. The words of God the prophets recorded include the betrayal, destruction, and judgment of both Israel and Judah (Jerusalem). Also among these words there are many prophecies about sending the son or savior. These prophecies were all fulfilled at the time of Jesus' first coming (Jn 19:30). According to the prophecies, when the Old Testament was fulfilled, God and Jesus came to their own country and their own people, but these people refused to accept Jesus. Instead of accepting him, they accused Jesus of being a heretic and worked tirelessly to kill him.

At that time, the Pharisees and Sadducees (the serpents) were ruling over the holy temple of Jerusalem (the capital of Israel) after

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they got rid of Zechariah and John the Baptist (Mt 23:2, 29-33). According to Mt 4, Satan took Jesus to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world. Satan told Jesus that if he bowed down and worshipped him, he would give Jesus all the kingdoms of the world (Mt 4:8-9). Satan could make this offer because all the kingdoms of the world were already his possessions (Lk 4:5-7). Jesus told the Pharisees and Sadducees that they were like "whitewashed tombs" (Mt 23:27), and he called the people of Jerusalem "the dead." This reveals that they had received the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil from the serpent, eaten it, and become spiritually dead like Adam and Eve.

Jesus forsook Physical Israel—the subjects of the kingdom who refused to acknowledge him—and he chose the disciples to proclaim the gospel of heaven. Jesus chose the disciples to declare that heaven had come. Although Jesus entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey according to a prophecy (Mt 21:1-11), most people still refused to accept him. Instead, these people worked to kill Jesus. This is why Jesus said, "The kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit," (Mt 21:43). After this, Jesus, along with heaven, left Physical Israel.

The overlap of the world of Spiritual Israel with the world of New Spiritual Israel

The prophecies of the New Testament will be fulfilled (Rv 21:6) just as the prophecies of the Old Testament were fulfilled at the time of Jesus' first coming (Jn 19:30). Just as the Israelites in the time of the Old Testament misunderstood the Bible (Mt 22:29),

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today's believers, who live at the time of the second coming, also greatly misunderstand the Bible because they have no interest in learning the true meaning of the prophecies.

The prophecies in the New Testament concern the overlap of one generation with another, where the previous generation passes away and the next one begins. They reveal the process by which one generation is destroyed and disappears as a new generation is created. Since the prophecies are written in this way, the fulfillment of the New Testament prophecies also comes through the destruction of one generation and the creation of another.

In Mt 23, Jesus said he longed to gather the people of Jerusalem to himself just as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but they refused. This is why Jesus told them, "You will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord,'" (Mt 23:37-39). Even after hearing this, the disciples were unconcerned, and they proceeded to point out to Jesus certain features of the temple in Jerusalem that had taken 46 years to build. Jesus then told his disciples that not one stone from Jerusalem's buildings would be left on another, but that every one would be thrown down (Mt 23:38, 24:2).

Still, even after listening to these words of warning, the disciples did not respond immediately. They went to Jesus later and asked, "Tell us, when will these things happen? And what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" (Mt 24:3).

Jesus' first answer to their question was a warning, "Watch out that no one misleads you," (Mt 24:4-5). Jesus also told them that

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there would be fighting between the kingdom of good and the kingdom of evil, and that nation would rise against nation. This concerns a time when the chosen people of God fight against the evil ones of Satan just like the fight between John the Baptist and the Pharisees. Jesus said that all these things must take place first, before the second coming (Mt 24:6-7). Clearly, these warnings are directly related to the prophecies about the events of betrayal and destruction, which must take place before the second coming (2 Thes 2:1-3). The kingdom of good fights against the kingdom of evil; lawlessness, which is evil, becomes pervasive. The destroyers (false pastors), who destroy the kingdom of good, stand in the holy Tabernacle Temple (Mt 24:11-15). The chosen people—symbolized by the sun, moon, and stars of heaven—no longer give their light and fall from the sky because of their destruction. They are like Adam, who began with the spirit and returned to the flesh. The people who belonged to heaven become people who belong to the earth (Gal 3:1-3).

Revelation 13 describes this same event when it mentions the group of the dragon that invades the tabernacle of God, fights and defeats its congregation members, and rules with authority over every tribe, people, language, and nation. This is like when the Pharisees sat in Moses' seat at the time of Jesus' first coming (Mt 23). Revelation 18 mentions that all nations are deceived and destroyed by Spiritual Babylon (the kingdom of demons), and that all nations are drunk on the maddening wine of Babylon's adulteries. The merchants (evangelists) of the nations evangelized

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to people and grew wealthy using the teachings of the kingdom of demons, and the believers of the deceived nations have been married to Satan. These events occur in accordance with Jesus' prophecy when he said that the days of the Son of Man would be like the days of Noah and Lot (Lk 17:26-30). Since this is the reality of the destruction, which has been fulfilled according to the prophecies, it is understandable that Jesus asked, "When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?" (Lk 18:8). Who can claim to be saved, to have received the holy spirit, or to be orthodox after considering the reality and all-encompassing nature of the destruction mentioned above?

After these events of destruction, Jesus will come with his angels to the place where day has become night. Jesus, together with his angels, blows the trumpet that testifies about these events and harvests those who are awake from the north, south, east, and west (Mt 24:29-31). The events of betrayal, destruction, and salvation are the prophecies and the physical fulfillment that are recorded in the New Testament.

Above all else, believers should know the prophecies, believe in their fulfillment, and act according to it. When the prophecies of the New Testament are fulfilled, Spiritual Israel will be brought to an end just as Physical Israel was. This process of being brought to an end is the process of destruction that is described above. Just as it occurred after the events of destruction in the first coming of Jesus, when the sun, moon, and stars go dark—when the light of day turns to night—Jesus comes like a thief, chooses his disciples,

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and harvests to create a new kingdom (Mt 24:29-31, 40-43). Hence, at the time of the second coming, one generation passes away and a new generation is created. Spiritual Israel is destroyed and New Spiritual Israel begins its work of salvation.

Just like the Old Testament, the New Testament also logically records the process by which a new nation rises after the betrayal and destruction of the chosen people. These prophecies were written so that people might be able to see and believe in their fulfillment. Believers must know the New Testament prophecies (e.g., Mt 24 and Revelation) and the work of betrayal, destruction, and salvation that are fulfilled according to these prophecies. This is what it means to distinguish the times, and this is what we must understand and keep.

In a time like this, where is the gate of salvation? No matter how narrow the gate may be, believers must still find it and walk through it to survive the coming flood (Rv 21:12-13, 21-22). This is when the Lord comes with the angels, blowing the trumpet, and riding on a cloud. In other words, Jesus comes as a spirit (Mt 24:30-31, Rv 1:7). It is only with wisdom that people can know and distinguish the signs of the times.

In the same way that God and his angels worked through Jesus at the time of the first coming, Jesus comes as a spirit in the time of the second coming to work with his angels through the chosen pastor and his disciples to establish the nation promised in the New Testament. Anyone who is ignorant of the prophecies in the Bible and who is unable to distinguish the times will be destroyed

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just like the people of Noah's time that lived in idleness by eating, drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage. It is possible to be saved, however, by remaining awake. Who should people follow at the end of the age when all nations, pastors, and congregation members are deceived? That is a time to dig deeply into the word of God. Consider the word to be your teacher and your path. Those who are led and taught by the word—those who move toward God—will receive salvation (Jn 6:45).

21. Distinguishing good and evil spirits

[Ref.: Is 14:12-14; Ez 28:12-16; 2 Pt 2:4; 2 Cor 11:13-15; 1 Jn 4:1-6]

At the end of the age, false christs and false prophets appear to deceive even the elect if that were possible (Mt 24:23-26). Therefore, to avoid being deceived believers must be careful to test and distinguish the spirit that is speaking through any pastor they may meet (1 Jn 4:1).

- [23]"Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There he is!' do not believe him. [24]For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. [25]Remember, I have told you ahead of time. [26]So then, if someone says to you, 'Look, he is in the wilderness,' do not go out, or 'Look, he is in the inner rooms,' do not believe him." (Mt 24:23-26)

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- Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to determine if they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. (1 Jn 4:1)

It could be said that the entire Bible describes the war between God and the devil (Satan). Let us learn more about the entity called the devil.

In Revelation, an entity called the dragon appears. This dragon is a serpent called the devil, or Satan, and he leads the whole world astray (Rv 20:2-3, 12:9).

- [2]He seized the dragon – the ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan – and tied him up for a thousand years. [3]The angel then threw him into the abyss and locked and sealed it so that he could not deceive the nations until the one thousand years were finished. (After these things he must be released for a brief period of time.) (Rv 20:2-3)

- So that huge dragon – the ancient serpent, the one called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world – was thrown down to the earth, and his angels along with him. (Rv 12:9)

God, who created the heavens and the earth (Gn 1:1; Jn 1:1-4), also created serpents that are real physical animals. The serpent that deceived Eve, however, was not a physical serpent (Gn 3:1). It was a person symbolized by a serpent, a wild beast. By extension, any person whom Satan's spirit enters can figuratively be referred to as a serpent. When the spirit of Satan (who is a serpent) enters a flesh, that flesh can be figuratively called a serpent.

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How, then, did Satan (the devil), who is figuratively called a serpent or a dragon, come into existence? There are many angels in the spiritual world that are organized around the throne of God (Rv 4:2-6; Rv 5:11), but the devil cannot be found among them.

- [2]Immediately I was in the Spirit, and a throne was standing in heaven with someone seated on it! ... [5]From the throne came out flashes of lightning and roaring and crashes of thunder. Seven flaming torches, which are the seven spirits of God, were burning in front of the throne [6]and in front of the throne was something like a sea of glass, like crystal. In the middle of the throne and around the throne were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. (Rv 4:2-6)

- Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels in a circle around the throne, as well as the living creatures and the elders. Their number was ten thousand times ten thousand – thousands times thousands. (Rv 5:11)

If God did not create the devil while creating the spiritual world, how did the devil come to exist? Among the angels God created as ministering spirits (Heb 1:14), one angel decided to go against God. Failing to maintain his proper position, this angel abandoned his home and created a sect in his desire to become higher and to be like God. This is the origin of Satan (Is 14:12-14; 2 Pt 2:4, Jude 1:6; Ez 28:12-16). Since the appearance of Satan (the evil spirit who is the angel that sinned), it has been necessary to distinguish the two types of spirits; believers must distinguish holy spirits from evil spirits.

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- [12]Look how you have fallen from the sky, O shining one, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the ground, O conqueror of the nations! [13]You said to yourself, "I will climb up to the sky. Above the stars of El I will set up my throne. I will rule on the mountain of assembly on the remote slopes of Zaphon. [14]I will climb up to the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High!" (Is 14:12-14)

- For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but threw them into hell and locked them up in chains in utter darkness, to be kept until the judgment ... (2 Pt 2:4)

- You also know that the angels who did not keep within their proper domain but abandoned their own place of residence, he has kept in eternal chains in utter darkness, locked up for the judgment of the great day. (Jude 1:6)

- [12]Son of man, sing a lament for the king of Tyre, and say to him, "This is what the sovereign LORD says: 'You were the sealer of perfection, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. [13]You were in Eden, the garden of God. Every precious stone was your covering, the ruby, topaz, and emerald, the chrysolite, onyx, and jasper, the sapphire, turquoise, and beryl; your settings and mounts were made of gold. On the day you were created they were prepared. [14]I placed you there with an anointed guardian cherub; you were on the holy mountain of God; you walked about amidst fiery stones. [15]You were blameless in your behavior from the day you were created, until sin was discovered in you. [16]In the abundance of your trade you were filled with violence,

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and you sinned; so I defiled you and banished you from the mountain of God – the guardian cherub expelled you from the midst of the stones of fire.'" (Ez 28:12-16)

Just as Satan used deception to create a sect in the spiritual world, Satan works through people's flesh to deceive God's people in the physical world. Just as Satan masquerades as an angel of light, his servants in the physical world also masquerade as servants of righteousness. False pastors masquerade as pastors of Christ (2 Cor 11:13-15). These people are like Cain, Balaam, and Korah (Jude 1:11-13) because they walk the wrong path. They do not have the holy spirit (Jude 1:17-19).

- [13]For such people are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. [14]And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. [15]Therefore it is not surprising his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will correspond to their actions. (2 Cor 11:13-15)

- [11]Woe to them! For they have traveled down Cain's path, and because of greed have abandoned themselves to Balaam's error; hence, they will certainly perish in Korah's rebellion. [12]These men are dangerous reefs at your love feasts, feasting without reverence, feeding only themselves. They are waterless clouds, carried along by the winds; autumn trees without fruit – twice dead, uprooted; [13]wild sea waves, spewing out the foam of their shame; wayward stars for whom the utter depths of eternal darkness have been reserved. (Jude 1:11-13)

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✦ [17]But you, dear friends – recall the predictions foretold by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. [18]For they said to you,"In the end time there will come scoffers, propelled by their own ungodly desires." [19]These people are divisive, worldly, devoid of the Spirit. (Jude 1:17-19)

Daniel 4, Rv 13, and Rv 16-18 describe the nations, pastors, and people that unite with Satan. The angel that sinned became Satan, because the word Satan means *one who divides or opposes*. Satan left his position of authority, abandoned his home, and created a sect. He went against God and God's people. Believers should understand that anyone who fails to maintain his or her proper position—anyone who abandons his or her home to create a sect and oppose us—this person is an antichrist who has received the spirit of Satan.

Today, anyone who claims to be God, Jesus, or the rider of the white horse is controlled by Satan. Anyone who denies the one sent by God and Jesus is an antichrist; anyone who leaves us and creates a sect is an antichrist (1 Jn 2:18-19, 22; Jude 1:17-19). As stated above, many false christs, antichrists, and false prophets (pastors) will appear in the end of the age to deceive everyone, even the elect, if possible (Mt 24:23-26; 1 Jn 4:1; 2 Jn 1:7).

How, then, is it possible to distinguish the type of spirit that works within a person? According to Jn 6:63, the word is spirit. Therefore, it is possible to distinguish which type of spirit is working through a person by listening to the words that person speaks. Anyone who speaks the words of God must belong to God, and anyone who speaks the words of the world must belong to the

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world. The spirit of truth, which is a holy spirit, works within a person who speaks the words of God. The spirit of Satan, which is an evil spirit, works within a person who speaks the words of the world in order to deceive (1 Jn 4:5-6).

❖ [5]They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world's perspective and the world listens to them. [6]We are from God; the person who knows God listens to us, but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of deceit. (1 Jn 4:5-6)

May all believers distinguish spirits using the Bible so that they can avoid being deceived by Satan until they reach salvation.

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22. Two types of kingdoms and people

[Ref: Mt 24; Rv 13, 12; Jer 25; Rv 19; Dn 1]

When the disciples asked Jesus about the signs of the end of the age, he told them that before the end they would hear of wars and rumors of wars. He said that nation would rise up against nation and kingdom would rise up against kingdom (Mt 24:3-7). There are only two types of kingdoms and peoples mentioned in the Bible: God's and Satan's.

Over the past 6,000 years of history, however, there have been many kingdoms (peoples) on Earth. Which among them belonged to God and which belonged to Satan? What kind of kingdom do God and Satan each have?

Before learning about the two types of kingdoms of heaven and earth, it is important to first know about religion. Religion cannot exist without some sort of god to worship. It is as if each god gives birth to its own religion, and for this reason, a religion without a god is not a religion at all. A religion without a god is just a group of people. The god who created the heavens and the earth is the one and only God, who is not made of flesh and bones. The earth was created by God, who is the lord of creation.

A person can only claim to know about true religion when they know about the world of the one and only God—the spiritual world where God's kingdom exists. Many scriptures mention an angel of this kingdom, who, although he was in a position of great

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authority, left his position and home, created his own sect, and began to oppose God (Is 14:12-14; Ez 28:12-16; Jude 1:6). This spirit is variously called the evil spirit, the dragon, the devil, Satan, or the serpent (Rv 20:2). This was how the two types of kingdoms—God's kingdom of holy spirits and the devil's kingdom of evil spirits—came into existence. The evil spirits that left God's kingdom came to the earth and masquerade as good angels (2 Cor 11:14). They deceive the chosen people of God's kingdom here on earth (i.e., the physical world), tricking them into also falling away from God. They force the people they deceive to create their own sects in the physical world just like the evil spirits did in the spiritual world. In doing so they continue to oppose God and his chosen people (Mt 24:23-24; 1 Jn 2:18-19; Jude 1:17-19).

The division of the spiritual world (i.e., the world of God, who founded true religion) in two by the evil spirits caused the division of the people of religion in the physical world because the evil spirits worked within them. The nations of Israel and Babylon appeared here in the physical world to represent the two nations that appeared in the spiritual world. These two nations became enemies and have been battling each other ever since. Each nation worships and is controlled by its own god. In the physical world, neither nation claims to worship Satan. Both nations claim to believe in and worship the true God.

This happens because Satan claims to be God (2 Thes 2:4; Ez 28). It is impossible to determine the type of spirit that controls a person by looking only at that person's outward appearance. We know,

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however, that these two groups of religious people fight with one another because they are controlled by opposing spirits. They have been fighting since the time of Adam, and since Adam, every person sent by God has been persecuted and killed by the people who belong to Satan (Acts 7:51-53). Who is good and who is evil—the one who kills or the one who is killed? God created all things in heaven and earth and entrusted them to Adam. It was the devil who took Adam and the entire earth as his own possessions (Mt 4).

God sent the prophets and apostles in an effort to regain his entire creation, but the devil had them all killed. This is the history God recorded in the Bible.

❖ 51"You stubborn people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are always resisting the holy spirit, like your ancestors did! 52Which of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute? They killed those who foretold long ago the coming of the Righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become! 53You received the law by decrees given by angels, but you did not obey it." (Acts 7:51-53)

Since it was through people (i.e., the group of Satan) that God lost all things in heaven and earth, all things must be regained through people as well. The Bible was recorded to make known the prophecies and their fulfillment. It is impossible to recognize God's kingdom and God's true pastor by their outward appearance alone. The prophecies were recorded to make it possible for people to distinguish the two types of kingdoms. All of God's prophecies appear as a physical reality at an appointed time. According to Mt 24, nation will rise against nation and kingdom against

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kingdom. In this battle, the destroyers (i.e., the group of the devil) are victorious and proceed to stand in the holy place. The chosen people—represented by the sun, moon, and stars of heaven—fall to the earth. Their falling plunges the world into the darkness of spiritual night because there is no longer any light. This is when some people from the tabernacle that is being destroyed are able to flee to safety and salvation.

The most important thing to realize about these signs of the end of the age is that Satan and his people are the ones standing on the holy pulpit (Mt 23:2; Mt 24:15). According to Rv 13, the seven pastors of the dragon enter God's tabernacle, fight against its congregation members, and overcome them. They rule over the tabernacle and the believers there, marking their foreheads and hands with the name of the beast. They even force the congregation of God's tabernacle to worship them.

This is the role of the pastors who belong to the devil. God has clearly recorded it in the Bible because he wants us to understand and believe in the physical fulfillment when we see that these things have taken place (Jn 14:29). Some people interpret the kingdoms that rise against other kingdoms and the nations that rise against other nations literally. They imagine that these kingdoms in the Bible refer to the Soviet Union fighting against the United States—communism versus democracy. The religious world, however, has no national boundaries. These nations do not refer to the physical nations of the world. Although all churches claim to belong to Jesus, the truth is that they are part of God's kingdom and people

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or the devil's kingdom and people depending on the type of spirit within them. In the time of the first coming, Jesus' disciples and the Pharisees were members of the same physical nation (i.e., Israel). Both groups were people of Physical Israel, but spiritually, they represented two different nations and peoples. This logic also applies to the two types of nations and peoples mentioned in Mt 24 and in Revelation. Just as it was in the time of the first coming, although two Korean Christians belong to the same physical nation, they can belong to two different spiritual nations depending on which type of spirit controls them. The Bible mentions both true pastors and false pastors—heaven and hell. To non-believers, however, such things mean little if anything at all.

There are many paths people walk in an attempt to find truth; there are many religions and denominations in the world. The Bible, however, has promised that God and heaven will return, descending upon just one person (Rv 3:12, 21). Even if God, the spiritual world, and the word descend, how would anyone know since they are all invisible? At the time of the first coming, John the Baptist and Jesus proclaimed, "The ax is laid at the root of the trees" and "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near," as they began their respective ministries (Mt 3). God and heaven descended on John the Baptist and Jesus at that time (Mt 3:2, 11:2, 4:17, 13:24). John the Baptist worked briefly as the lampstand—the messenger that prepared the way for Jesus. Jesus, who is light, went to the temple of John the Baptist, and proclaimed the gospel of heaven with God. Since, however, the chosen people of Israel refused to receive him,

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heaven left along with Jesus (Mt 21:42-43). God, Jesus, and heaven return to descend upon the one who overcomes (Rv 2-3, 12) and to those who are sealed with the word—the 144,000 of the twelve tribes of New Spiritual Israel.

Anyone who truly believes in the Bible and in God should make every possible effort to attain salvation by finding the nation of the twelve tribes that has mastered the Bible. These are the twelve tribes of Shincheonji Church of Jesus, which God promised.

23. The spiritual and physical battles between God and Satan

[Ref.: Mt 4:1-11; Mt 24; Rv 2-3; Rv 12; Rv 15; Dt 28]

The Bible mentions both physical battles and spiritual battles. Since Adam sinned roughly 6,000 years ago, God and Satan have been at war over God's kingdom and people. Most of the battles that occurred before the time of Jesus were physical battles, but those that have occurred since Jesus' time have all been spiritual. Although the Old Testament mentions numerous physical battles between Israel and the gentile nation of Babylon, all the battles of both the Old and New Testaments are fought between the chosen people of God's kingdom and the people of Satan's kingdom.

Jacob became Physical Israel after he fought and overcame an angel (Gn 32:24-28). Jesus became Spiritual Israel after he overcame the world (Jn 16:33). At the time of the second coming, the pastor promised in Revelation becomes New Spiritual Israel by

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overcoming Satan and his Nicolaitans—the group of the dragon, which is also known as the beast with seven heads and ten horns (Rv 12:7-11). In Rv 12, a war between God's chosen people and the gentiles occurs in the physical world while God's spirits are battling Satan's spirits in the spiritual world. The chosen people are believers who belong to God and the gentiles are believers who belong to Satan. When outsiders (the people of the world) or those who are ignorant of God's will see this war (spiritual and physical) taking place within a single religion, what will they say? Such warfare must exist, however, to fulfill God's will.

According to Dt 28, those who overcome receive everything and become the head. Those who are defeated lose everything, become the tail, and scatter in seven directions. In Mt 24, Jesus prophesies that nation will rise against nation, and kingdom will rise against kingdom. Lawlessness prevails and the destroyers who invade God's tabernacle are able to stand in the holy place. Jesus told us that these events must take place. At the time of the first coming, Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament and brought Physical Israel to an end. In the time of the New Testament, however, it is a generation of spiritual, not physical warfare (Eph 6:10-17).

Jesus said to Peter, "For all who take hold of the sword will die by the sword," (Mt 26:52). In this case, Jesus was not just speaking about physical warfare; his words also apply to spiritual warfare. What are the weapons used for spiritual warfare? Why must we fight?

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First, let us consider the reason for spiritual warfare. God's chosen people must fight against the gentiles (i.e., Satan's people) because Satan has conquered all of creation; he has made God's kingdom and people his own possession. Satan has deceived people into thinking his ecclesiastical laws and authority are orthodox. Satan's people persecute and kill those who do not belong to Satan as heretics. A war must be fought to return to God and his chosen people what they have lost. Would there be a need to fight against the gentiles if they acknowledged their faults and returned God's rightful possessions? All of creation—everything in heaven and earth that is currently under the control of Satan—originally belonged to God. This is why God's people must retrieve it by using the word of truth as a weapon in the battle against Satan and his people (Mt 4:1-11; Rv 12:1-12).

In the time of the first coming, both heaven and John the Baptist, who came as the messenger who prepared the way, were conquered by the Pharisees and teachers of the law (Mt 11:12-13). In the time of the second coming, both heaven (the tabernacle of the seven golden lampstands) and the seven messengers, who acted as the lamp that prepared the way, were deceived by Satan's Nicolaitans, just as Eve was deceived by the serpent. The seven messengers received the teachings of the Nicolaitans, ate the food sacrificed to idols, and committed sexual immorality with Satan (Rv 2-3, 13). In other words, the seven messengers and their tabernacle (i.e., heaven) were invaded and destroyed.

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The events of Rv 2-3 are recorded in Rv 13 in a slightly different way. The group of the dragon (i.e., the beast with seven heads and ten horns) enters the tabernacle of heaven, fights against its people, and defeats them. The congregation members receive the mark of the beast (its name) on their foreheads and right hands, and they begin to worship the beast. This beast that invades the tabernacle is Satan's group of Nicolaitans mentioned in Rv 2-3. This same event is described in Mt 24 as a spiritual battle which ends with the destroyers standing in the holy place after the sun, moon, and stars darken and fall. In a second battle mentioned in Rv 12, the group of the dragon and the group of God fight against each other in both the spiritual and physical worlds, but this time the spirits and flesh on God's side are victorious.

What are the weapons used in spiritual warfare? Just as it was in the time of the first coming (Mt 4:1-11), the weapons used in spiritual warfare are the words of God, which are the words of testimony (Rv 12:1-11). A person who speaks these words can be used as a weapon when they are controlled by the spirit. Bows, swords, hail, fire, and water (Rv 6, 8) are all weapons used in spiritual warfare because they figuratively represent God's word. These are the only weapons capable of capturing the devil, because he is a spirit against whom physical weapons are ineffective. When God's people fight and overcome in Rv 12, they gather around the sea of glass before God's throne (Rv 15) and form the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony, which testifies about the fulfillment of Revelation. The angels of this temple use those who overcame,

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gathered at the sea of glass, as the bowls of God's wrath. In Rv 16, the angels pour these bowls of wrath onto the betrayers and the destroyers of the beast's kingdom. Revelation 17 introduces the secret of the prostitute of Babylon and the beast with seven heads and ten horns. These are also the destroyers against whom God's people fight. The destruction of Babylon is proclaimed in Rv 18, and Rv 19 describes how Babylon (i.e., the beast belonging to the dragon) is captured and thrown into the fiery lake of burning sulfur.

Over the past 6,000 years of biblical history, God and Satan have been in a continual state of war. Even today, at the time of Revelation, the battles promised in Rv 13 and Rv 12 have already taken place according to God's prophecies. Even now, the war continues (Rv 16:12-16). At this time when all nations have been deceived, God's people must wake up from their sleep and recognize the side on which they must stand to receive salvation. All believers must know that it is only through faith that people can attain salvation.

Who is orthodox and who is a cult? The answers can only be found in the Bible. It is pointless to argue about the definitions of orthodoxy and heresy using the doctrines of the countless denominations that exist today. The Bible must be used as the only standard to judge between orthodoxy and heresy.

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24. Churches and their pastors

[Ref.: 1 Jn 4:5-6; Rv 15:4-5]

A church is a gathering of people who believe in Jesus Christ and teach his words. In fact, any gathering place for believers of God and Jesus where the words of the Bible are shared can be considered a church, regardless of its physical location. A church does not even require a dedicated building for worship; if there are believers there with the words of the Bible, then it is a church.

Paul called believers God's temple or church (1 Cor 1:2, 3:16). He also called Jesus' body a church (Eph 1:23). These passages reveal that a church is not confined to its building. If we understand it this way, then a gathering place where worldly stories and the teachings of men are being taught—a place that lacks God's word—cannot be considered a church.

Jesus also called himself a temple (Jn 2:19-21) and claimed that God was within him (Jn 14:10-11). God made Jesus a temple, dwelled in him, and spoke through him (Jn 14:24). Just like Jesus, if we have God in our hearts, we become the church.

Anyone who wants to find the true church must go to the place from which the word of God comes. The secular words spoken by today's churches provide ample evidence that they belong to the world. Those who do speak God's word, however, speak the evidence that they belong to heaven (1 Jn 4:5-6).

Revelation records the one church that is promised by God. It says that God and the angels of the spiritual realm dwell within

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this promised church (Rv 4, 21), and that all nations will come to worship there. This church all nations will seek, find, and at which all will worship, is the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony (Rv 15:4-5). Before Revelation is fulfilled, believers worship at countless churches all over the world. When the promised time comes, however, all believers must come to worship at the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony.

The Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony is the one church promised in the New Testament, and as such, it is the place where the pastor promised by the Lord in Revelation will lead worship. Because the topic of the promised pastor is mentioned several times in "Part 2: A treatise on the creation of heaven and earth," I will omit any further explanation here. What is clear, however, is that when Revelation is fulfilled, all believers must go to the pastor and the temple promised by Jesus and by the book of Revelation in order to receive salvation. Those who refuse to believe in the events of Revelation, the promised pastor, and the promised temple—those who reject God's will by believing only in their own pastor and their own church—these people cannot receive salvation (Mt 7:21-23).

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25. The promised messenger at the first and second comings

[Ref.: Mal 3:1; Mt 11:10-15; Jn 5:35-39; Jn 14:16-17, 26; Rv 10]

Who are the messengers promised by Jesus in the New Testament to prepare the way for the second coming? Who is the promised messenger of the covenant who appears at the temple of the messengers who prepare the way? When does that promised messenger of the covenant appear? Where does he appear? To understand correctly, let us first discuss the messenger who prepared the way and the promised messenger of the covenant prophesied in the Old Testament.

- "I am about to send my messenger, who will clear the way before me. Indeed, the Lord you are seeking will suddenly come to his temple, and the messenger of the covenant, whom you long for, is certainly coming," says the Lord who rules over all. (Mal 3:1)

- Look, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of the Lord arrives. (Mal 4:5)

At the first coming, John the Baptist baptized in Judea and Jerusalem working to urge people toward repentance (Mt 3). At that time, the Jewish leaders sent people to ask John who he claimed to be. John responded concerning himself that he was neither the Christ nor Elijah. Instead, he said, "I am the voice of one shouting

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in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way for the Lord,' as Isaiah the prophet said," (Jn 1:19-23). Neither the Jews nor even John the Baptist himself understood that John the Baptist was Elijah. They could not understand because their generation was dwelling in darkness. Their lack of understanding can be taken as evidence that no one was spiritually awake at that time.

The fulfillment of both the Old and New Testament prophecies, which is the accomplishment of God's will, begins with the appearance of the messenger who prepares the way. It must be made clear that the messenger of the covenant and the rest of the physical fulfillment of the Old and New Testament prophecies cannot appear unless this messenger who prepares the way appears first.

Jesus took Peter, James, and James' brother John up a high mountain (i.e., the mountain of the transfiguration). At that point, "He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as light," (Mt 17:1-2). Moses and Elijah appeared and spoke with Jesus (Mt 17:3). From a cloud, God said, "This is my son, whom I love, with him I am well pleased. Listen to him," (Mt 17:5, NIV). On the mountain of transfiguration Jesus and his disciples were still flesh, but Moses, Elijah, and God were spirits. Jesus instructed the disciples, "Do not tell anyone about the vision until the Son of Man is raised from the dead," (Mt 17:9). The disciples later asked him, "'Why then do the experts in the law say that Elijah must come first?' He answered, 'And I tell you that Elijah has already come ...' Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them about John the Baptist," (Mt 17:10-13).

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How could John the Baptist be Elijah? If the disciples saw Elijah on the mountain of transfiguration with Moses, why was John the Baptist called Elijah? Did not John the Baptist clearly say that he was not Elijah?

Because it was God who gave birth to religion, religion that excludes God cannot be true religion at all. God, however, does not speak directly to his people. God enters one person and speaks his words to others through that person. The entity of Elijah, who was to come, came as a spirit into the flesh of John the Baptist to accomplish his work (Mt 11:10-15). This is why John the Baptist came in the name of Elijah (Lk 1:17). Jesus, however, came in the name of the Father. In other words, the holy spirit of the Father came and spoke through Jesus (Jn 5:43, 1:32, 14:9-11, 10:30). Today, the spirit of the advocate (i.e., the holy spirit) has already come in the name of Jesus (Jn 14:26). A certain pastor has been chosen as the advocate in the physical world and he comes to believers in the name of the spirit of the advocate. This means that the holy spirit who acts as the spiritual advocate is inside the chosen pastor who is the physical advocate (Jn 14:16-17).

The messengers that act as lamps preparing the way in the Old and New Testaments can only shine for a short time. They give their light until the messenger of the covenant comes (Jn 5:35). In addition, these lamp-like messengers do not even know who they themselves are. In the time of the first coming, the disciples did not know until Jesus made it known to them. According to the logic of betrayal, destruction, and salvation, these lamp-like messengers

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are only able to briefly shine their light until the promised pastor comes because they betray God and are destroyed by the gentiles. It is also because the promised pastor has other prophecies to fulfill. The messengers that prepare the way must hand over their kingdom and people to the promised messenger, and then they must become less important (Jn 3:30). Because John the Baptist erred by failing to do this, his faith was weakened to the point of doubting Jesus (Lk 7:18-20).

The lamp-like messengers that prepare the way in fulfillment of the New Testament prophecies must appear first in Revelation (Rv 1, 2, 3); they must appear before invaders like the Pharisees "sit" in the temple established by the messengers that prepare the way (Rv 13). The seven messengers of the tabernacle of the seven golden lampstands carried out this work of the lamp that shines its light for a short time. They did not know what role they themselves were playing in the fulfillment of the prophecies, nor did they recognize the identity of the Nicolaitans (Satan) who invaded their tabernacle.

Therefore, the promised pastor—the one who overcomes—reveals to the lamp-like messengers, as well as to the invading Nicolaitans (Satan), their identities by sending them letters (Rv 2-3). When the messengers of the seven lamps that prepare the way receive these letters, they can realize several things by reading them. They should recognize the existence of the one who overcomes the invading Nicolaitans, they should recognize that heaven descends on and dwells with that person who overcomes, and they should

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see that the one who overcomes has already received from Jesus the iron scepter to rule over all nations, the right to judge, and the food of eternal life. Just like John the Baptist at the time of the first coming, however, the seven messengers of Revelation refuse to send their flock of sheep to the promised pastor because of doubt and because of their greed for authority. This failure results in their being overtaken by the destroyers. The messengers that prepare the way are unable to recognize their own identity, and they do not have firm beliefs about the invading destroyers and the promised messenger of the covenant. They are truly the lamp that shines and gives light for a time; they are not the true light.

The messenger of the covenant promised in the New Testament prophecies appears in the place invaded by the Nicolaitans according to the book of Revelation. This is also the place where the messengers of the seven lamps were working (the tabernacle of the seven golden lampstands—Rv 1:20; Rv 2-3). That promised pastor is portrayed in the four gospels as the pastor who receives the spirit of truth (the advocate) and who comes in the name of Jesus. He is also portrayed in Rv 10 as the one who eats the opened scroll from heaven and then testifies again to many peoples, nations, languages, and kings.

Along with the angels sent by Jesus, this promised pastor fulfills what is promised in Revelation. He has seen and heard the fulfillment and is testifying about it (Rv 1:2, 22:16). The messengers of the lampstands that prepare the way work for a short time before being brought to an end by invading enemies (Rv 13). The messenger

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of the covenant, on the other hand, creates the twelve tribes of God's kingdom by overcoming these adversaries (Rv 7, 14). It is through the fulfillment of these events that each of these entities are made known.

Prophecies are made so that people can believe when the fulfillment of those prophecies arrives (Jn 14:29). Therefore, everyone must believe that the person who has seen, heard, and testified according to the promises in Revelation is the promised pastor. The Old Testament testifies about one person—Jesus Christ (Jn 5:39). The New Testament also testifies about one person—the advocate, who is the one who overcomes and the one who eats the opened scroll (Rv 2-3, 10, 22:16). It is only when a person believes in the promised pastor and keeps the words of his testimony that he or she can attain salvation.

26. The promised pastor of the New Testament

[Ref.: Gn 32:28; Jn 16:33; Rv 12:10-11; Rv 3:12, 21]

Who is the pastor promised in the New Testament? The pastor Jesus promised in the New Testament is the one who fights and defeats the Nicolaitans mentioned in Rv 2-3. If the Old Testament testified about one promised pastor in Jesus (Jn 5:39), it could be said that the New Testament proclaims one pastor promised by Jesus. What do these two promised pastors have in common? They both overcame the world.

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Jesus, who was promised in the Old Testament, fought and defeated Satan (Mt 4:1-11; Jn 16:33). If Jesus had been unable to defeat Satan, he would have been unable to recover the world from Satan's grasp and rebuild God's kingdom in the physical world. In Revelation, Jesus takes the sealed book from God's hand and opens its seven seals (Rv 5, 6, 8). Jesus is able to open the seven seals because he overcame Satan (Rv 5:5). If he had been unable to defeat Satan, he would be unable to open the sealed book. Satan would interfere and Jesus would be unable to fulfill the prophecies recorded in the sealed book.

According to Rv 6, Jesus conquered and is trying to conquer again (Rv 6:1-2). Jesus fought and defeated the devil, who was in control of the world in the time of the first coming (Jn 16:33). Jesus must fight with the devil and defeat him once more in the time of the second coming. First, Jesus defeats the dragon and its beast (Rv 12:7-11, 17:9-14). He then catches the beast and its false prophets and throws them into the fiery lake of burning sulfur (Rv 19:20) while an angel seizes the dragon and locks it up in the abyss (Rv 20:1-3).

Jesus, who himself overcame, promised in Rv 2-3 that the kingdom of heaven, eternal life, and the authority to rule would be given to the one who overcomes the pastors of Satan. Although Jesus overcame Satan in the spiritual world (Rv 12:7-9), without someone who fights and overcomes Satan's pastors in the physical world, God's kingdom, salvation, power, and authority cannot come. In other words, this world would belong to Satan forever. According

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to Rv 12, however, God's kingdom and salvation do come after the male child (i.e., the child born of the woman clothed with the sun) and his brothers defeat the group of the dragon (Rv 12:10-11).

Those who are defeated flee in seven ways (Dt 28), but the one who has overcome becomes Israel (Gn 32:28). It is the one who overcomes who must create the twelve tribes just like Jacob and Jesus did. This becomes the evidence that proves who was victorious and who was defeated. According to the prophecies of Rv 16-19, those who fought and overcame the dragon work with the angels to judge the people who belong to the dragon. Without overcoming, how could they judge?

The book of Revelation is a group of prophecies that will be fulfilled at the second coming of the Lord. Matthew 24, which can be considered a condensed version of Revelation, mentions a battle between the chosen people and the gentiles. This battle ends with the destroyers standing in the holy place (Mt 24:3-15). This is when the sun and moon darken and the stars fall. When the world is plunged into the darkness of night, Jesus finally comes with his angels to gather the elect (Mt 24:29-31). Revelation records these same events in a slightly different way. In Revelation, false pastors (the beast with seven heads and ten horns), who belong to the dragon, enter the church of the seven golden lampstands (the tabernacle of heaven), which is where the seven messengers who prepare the way for Jesus at the second coming are working. These false pastors fight against the congregation members of the tabernacle and win. After defeating them, the false pastors

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mark the foreheads and hands of the congregation members of the tabernacle with the name of beast (Rv 13). This is when one pastor appears from among the congregation members of the first tabernacle to begin the work of salvation along with Jesus (Rv 12).

This pastor is born of the woman clothed with the sun. He and his brothers fight and overcome the group of the dragon using the blood of the lamb and the word of their testimony (Rv 12:5-11). How does the one who overcomes, who is the promised pastor of the New Testament, work with the spirits in heaven to create God's kingdom?

According to Revelation, the war between God and Satan at the end of the age is completed in two phases with God and his people as the final victors (Rv 13, 12). Those who are defeated flee in seven ways, but the one who overcomes becomes Israel and establishes the twelve tribes (Rv 7). These outcomes clearly distinguish the one who overcomes from the one who is defeated. In addition to establishing the twelve tribes, the promised pastor who overcomes the dragon's group becomes the son of God who will inherit the kingdom as promised in Rv 21:7. The one who overcomes receives from Jesus the iron scepter to rule all nations, the food that leads to eternal life (the hidden manna), and the rock (white stone) of judgment (Rv 2:17, 26-28). God's name, the name of New Jerusalem, and the new name of Jesus are written on him, and he sits with Jesus on Jesus' throne (Rv 3:12, 21). With the promised pastor who overcomes at their center, the 144,000 people are marked with the seal of God and Jesus to become the twelve tribes of New Spiritual

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Israel. They receive salvation and become God's kingdom and priests (Rv 7:1-4, 14:1-5)

❖ [1]After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth so no wind could blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree. [2]Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, who had the seal of the living God. He shouted out with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given permission to damage the earth and the sea: [3]"Do not damage the earth or the sea or the trees until we have put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God." [4]Now I heard the number of those who were marked with the seal, one hundred and forty-four thousand, sealed from all the tribes of the people of Israel. (Rv 7:1-4)

If these people are marked with the seal of God, what does it mean for the name of God and the name of his son to be written on the one who overcomes?

God revealed his name to Moses roughly 2,500 years after God left Adam. Jehovah is the name of God, who is the word that has been present since the beginning (Ex 3:14-15; Jn 1:1). God revealed the name of his son Jesus 1,500 years later (Mt 1:18-25). Jesus is the numerator[2] of the word of truth. Today, 2,000 years have passed since the time of the first coming. God has fulfilled the promises

2 – The term used here is *boonja* (분자), which means *numerator, molecule,* or *element.* This word is used to describe the relationship between God and Jesus. Since Jesus is born of God, he is the word just as God is the word (Jn 1:1, 14). God is the father or the denominator, and Jesus is the son or the numerator. Jesus is created from the same "element" as God, namely the word.

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of the New Testament and has chosen one pastor to testify about that fulfillment. The name of this pastor is the new name of Israel, which means *one who overcomes.* For this reason, the one who overcomes is also the numerator of the word of truth.

Today, Jesus works through New Spiritual Israel, just as God worked through Jesus (Spiritual Israel) in the time of the first coming. This is why the living word (i.e., God and Jesus) is with Shincheonji, which is the nation of New Spiritual Israel whose people have been born of the seed of the word present since the beginning. This is the fulfillment of God's will—the re-creation of heaven and earth as recorded in Gn 1.

27. The advocate, the holy spirit, and the promised pastor

[Ref.: Jn 14; Jn 15; Jn 16; 1 Jn 2:1; Rv 10]

What is the meaning of *advocate* or *counselor*? Who is our first advocate and who is the other advocate to whom Jesus referred? How are they different? What is the relationship between the spiritual advocate—the holy spirit—and God's promised pastor?

First, let us learn the meaning of the word *advocate.*

The Greek word *parakletos* is variously translated as advocate or counselor. An advocate is someone who speaks in another's defense, and a counselor is one who advises. The Chinese and Korean words (保惠師: 보혜사: *bohaesah*) refer to someone who helps alongside, and similarly, the direct translation of the Chinese characters is a

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teacher who protects with grace. Thus, whether in referring to spirit or flesh, the advocate is someone who teaches and protects with grace. Any pastor who belongs to God must speak God's words on God's behalf, protect God's people with grace, and teach only the words of the path leading to God. Not just anyone, however, can become the advocate mentioned in the Bible.

Who is the first advocate and who is the other advocate? How are they different? The first advocate is Jesus (1 Jn 2:1), and because Jesus said he would send another advocate (Jn 14:16-17, 26), the other advocate must not be Jesus. I will explain further.

God, who promised to come to the earth in the Old Testament (Is 19:1, 20; Hos 2), came as he promised to his one chosen pastor—Jesus. When Jesus took Peter, John, and James to a high mountain to pray, a voice from a cloud told them that Jesus was his son, the chosen one (Lk 9:28-36). As the one who was chosen by God, Jesus served[3] the spirit of God, and spoke God's words on his behalf (Jn 14:8-10, 12:44-45, 14:24). Jesus also taught and protected his people with grace. This is why Jesus is the one referred to as the advocate who speaks on God's behalf (1 Jn 2:1)[4].

✥ [28]Now about eight days after these sayings, Jesus took with him Peter, John, and James, and went up the mountain to pray. [29]As he was

3 – The Korean word used here is *moshida* (모시다), which means *to attend* or *to serve*. If used in the context of attending to and serving one's parents, *boomorel moshida* (부모를 모시다), then it also has the meaning of being together and living with one's parents.

4 – A footnote in the Korean Bible points out that Jesus was the first *bohaesah* (보혜사).

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praying, the appearance of his face was transformed, and his clothes became very bright, a brilliant white. [30]Then two men, Moses and Elijah, began talking with him. ... [35]Then a voice came from the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, my Chosen One. Listen to him!" [36]After the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. So they kept silent and told no one at that time anything of what they had seen. (Lk 9:28-36)

✦ (My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.) But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous One ... (1 Jn 2:1)

Let us find out, then, the identity of the other advocate.

At the first coming, Jesus promised that after going to God the Father to prepare a place for us, he would return to make us believe that God is in him (Jn 14:1-3, 20-24). Jesus also promised that he would ask the Father to send another advocate (Jn 14:16-17).

Is this second advocate a spirit or flesh? The advocate Jesus promised to send is both spirit and flesh. The advocate Jesus sends from heaven is not flesh; it is the holy spirit of truth (Jn 14:16-17). This spirit is called the spirit of truth because he speaks God's word of truth on behalf of Jesus (Jn 17:17; Rv 19:10).

✦ [16]Then I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you forever – [17]the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot accept, because it does not see him or know him. But you know him, because he resides with you and will be in you. (Jn 14:16-17)

The spirit of the advocate that Jesus sends to this earth chooses a pastor through whom to work. This person is the promised

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pastor of the New Testament and works in the physical world as the physical advocate because the spirit of the advocate is with him. He teaches and speaks the words of God that he sees and hears from the spiritual advocate, and he protects God's people with grace on the spiritual advocate's behalf (Rv 10).

In whose name, then, did Jesus, who was chosen by God, come? In whose name does the second advocate, whom Jesus promised to send, come? Jesus came in the name of the Father (Jn 5:43), and the next advocate, the holy spirit of the advocate who comes from heaven at the second coming, comes in Jesus' name (Jn 14:26).

- I have come in my Father's name, and you do not accept me. If someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him. (Jn 5:43)

- But the Advocate, the holy spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and will cause you to remember everything I said to you. (Jn 14:26)

How are the spirit of the advocate and the promised pastor related? As mentioned briefly above, the spirit of the advocate, who comes in the Lord's name, chooses one pastor (i.e., the promised pastor) in the physical world and speaks through him. In other words, the promised pastor is the flesh who speaks on behalf of the spirit of the advocate.

How do spirits work in the physical world? Spirit work through flesh. That is, a spirit chooses a person and uses that person to speak and work on its behalf.

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Moses told the Israelites that he had come to speak and work on behalf of God, who is self-existent, because God sent him (Ex 3). The spirit of Elijah, who was prophesied to come in Mal 3-4, came to John the Baptist (Mt 11:13-14; Mt 17:10-13). Elijah worked as a spirit (Mt 17:1-5) through the flesh of John the Baptist. In other words, John the Baptist came in the name of Elijah (Mt 11:13-14; Lk 1:17).

At the first coming, God, who is spirit, worked within Jesus. This is why Jesus said that anyone who saw him had seen the Father (Jn 14:8-10, 12:44-46). It is also why Jesus was able to tell people that his words were not his own, but they were the words of the Father who sent him (Jn 14:24).

- [8]Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be content." [9]Jesus replied, "Have I been with you for so long, and you have not known me, Philip? The person who has seen me has seen the Father! How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? [10]Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you, I do not speak on my own initiative, but the Father residing in me performs his miraculous deeds. (Jn 14:8-10)

- [44]But Jesus shouted out, "The one who believes in me does not believe in me, but in the one who sent me, [45]and the one who sees me sees the one who sent me. [46]I have come as a light into the world, so that everyone who believes in me should not remain in darkness. (Jn 12:44-46)

- The person who does not love me does not obey my words. And the word you hear is not mine, but the Father's who sent me. (Jn 14:24)

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In the same way, when the disciples received the holy spirit on the day of Pentecost, they began to work according to the spirit's instructions (Acts 2:1-4). In Rom 8:9, Apostle Paul said that people without the spirit of Christ are not Christians. Thus, we can clearly see through all of these scriptures that spirits work through the flesh.

The next advocate, the holy spirit of truth, whom Jesus promised to send at the time of the second coming, does not hover about in midair shouting at people. Just as God, who is also a spirit, worked through Jesus' flesh, the spirit of the truth, who acts as our advocate, dwells within and speaks through the promised pastor (Jn 14:16-17; Rv 19:9-10, 22:8-9, 16). In Rv 10, an angel with the appearance of Jesus comes to Apostle John with the opened book of truth. This angel gives the book to John, tells him to eat it, and then speaks through John (Rv 10:1-2, 8-11). The angel who brings the book is the spirit of the advocate and John, who receives the book, is the promised pastor through whom the spirit of the advocate speaks. That is to say, the one pastor promised in the New Testament is the pastor who comes in the position of Apostle John and also the one who overcomes that is promised in Rv 2, 3, and 12. He is anointed by Jesus and is told to write down what he saw, what is, and what is still to come (Rv 1:10-19). Then, according to the angel's command, he speaks again to many peoples, nations, languages, and kings (Rv 10:1-2, 8-11).

✦ [8]Then the voice I had heard from heaven began to speak to me again, "Go and take the open scroll in the hand of the angel who is standing

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> on the sea and on the land." [9]So I went to the angel and asked him to give me the little scroll. He said to me, "Take the scroll and eat it. It will make your stomach bitter, but it will be as sweet as honey in your mouth." [10]So I took the little scroll from the angel's hand and ate it, and it did taste as sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it, my stomach became bitter. [11]Then they told me: "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, languages, and kings." (Rv 10:8-11)

According to all the verses above, since the holy spirit is indeed a spirit[5], he speaks and works through a person just as a person blows a trumpet. The spirit of the advocate, who comes in the name of Jesus, is the one who speaks on behalf of Jesus. Therefore, the person who receives the spirit of the advocate also becomes the advocate who speaks on behalf of Jesus. Just as Jesus and God are one (Jn 10:30), the pastor to whom the spirit of the advocate comes unites with that spirit.

In Revelation, God gives the word to Jesus, Jesus gives it to an angel, that angel (i.e., the spirit of the advocate) gives it to John (or rather the promised pastor who comes in the position of Apostle John), and John gives it to the servants of God (Rv 1:1-3). According to Jn 16, God speaks to Jesus, Jesus speaks to the spirit of the advocate, the spirit of the advocate speaks to the chosen pastor, and the chosen pastor speaks to "you" (i.e., the disciples and God's people) (Jn 16:13-15).

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5 – The Korean word used here is *shin* (신 or 神) which means *god, divine being,* or *spirit.*

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- [1]The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must happen very soon. He made it clear by sending his angel to his servant John, [2]who then testified to everything that he saw concerning the word of God and the testimony about Jesus Christ. [3]Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy aloud, and blessed are those who hear and obey the things written in it, because the time is near! (Rv 1:1-3)

- [13]But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. For he will not speak on his own authority, but will speak whatever he hears, and will tell you what is to come. [14]He will glorify me, because he will receive from me what is mine and will tell it to you. [15]Everything that the Father has is mine; that is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what is mine and will tell it to you. (Jn 16:13-15)

Both evil spirits and holy spirits can work through people, compelling them to act in the name of the spirit. Spirits speak through the flesh; flesh speaks on behalf of the spirit. Therefore, it is clear that the words a person speaks are actually the words of the spirit within that person.

Today, which is the time of the second coming, nothing is more important for Christians than finding the pastor who acts as the advocate because he speaks on behalf of the spirit of truth. How, then, do we recognize this promised pastor who is united with the spirit of the truth? Since 1 Cor 2:10 says that the spirit searches[6]

6 – The Korean word *tongdal* (통달) means *to master, be well-versed in,* or *to have thorough knowledge of something.*

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even the deep things of God, we can recognize the promised pastor as the person who has mastered the Bible and who is teaching it accordingly. The promised pastor, who has united with the spirit of the truth, has mastered the Bible through the word of truth and is teaching it in Shincheonji Church of Jesus and at Zion Christian Mission Center.

Any place that does not have the spirit of truth does not have the word of truth. The place where the holy spirit of truth (the spirit of the advocate) dwells completely understands both the prophecies of the Bible and their physical fulfillment (Jn 14:26, 16:8-15). Revelation 1:3 says that those who keep the words of Revelation are blessed. This is why all believers must meet the promised pastor, the advocate God has chosen, and receive the testimony of Jesus to attain salvation. This is the promise of the Bible. This is true faith and true obedience. Remember that only those who believe and keep this word of promise can attain salvation.

28. Heaven for those who are born again

[Ref.: Jn 3:1-6; 1 Pt 1:3-4, 23; 2 Cor 5:17]

Jesus said that no one could see or enter into God's kingdom without being born again of water and spirit (Jn 3:1-6). What does it mean to be born again of water and spirit? To which water and spirit was Jesus referring?

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✦ [1]Now a certain man, a Pharisee named Nicodemus, who was a member of the Jewish ruling council, [2]came to Jesus at night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs that you do unless God is with him." [3]Jesus replied, "I tell you the solemn truth, unless a person is born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God." [4]Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter his mother's womb and be born a second time, can he?" [5]Jesus answered, "I tell you the solemn truth, unless a person is born of water and spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. [6]What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. (Jn 3:1-6)

First, let us find out what it means to be born again of water and what this water symbolizes. In nature, plants and animals must have water to survive. Just as all living things, including man, can only live when water is present, the spirit of a man can live only in the presence of God's word. Since the word of God gives life to our spirits, the Bible likens it to water. God said he would send a famine through the land of Israel, not a physical famine, but a famine of hearing his words (Am 8:11). The Bible also uses grass and plants drinking in the dew and rain that fall upon them (Dt 32:2) as a metaphor that symbolizes God's people receiving his words from heaven.

Thus, the water Jesus told us we must find to be born again is the word of God (Jn 3:5; Dt 32:2). God's word washes our spirits clean (Jn 15:3). We cannot become new people of God if we are full of

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sin and the filth of the world. This is why we must wash away our sins with God's word to be born again.

God's word is also figuratively referred to as a seed (Lk 8:11). This is because all living things begin with a seed. The appearance and character of every living thing is determined by the seed from which it began. God's word is the seed that allows people to be born in the image of God. This is why Peter said believers should be born again of the imperishable seed, which is the enduring word of God (1 Pt 1:3-4, 23). Therefore, being born again of water and being born again of the seed of God both refer to the re-creation of our inner person through the word of God—the rebirth of our spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh and what is born of the spirit is spirit (Jn 3:6). Our flesh is born of the seed of our physical parents, and our spirit is born of the seed of God. Nothing of the flesh can allow our spirits to be born again. Our spirit can only be changed through spiritual intercession.

The impurities in our hearts must be removed for us to be born of God's seed. The ideologies and doctrines of the devil, which are likened unto weeds must be pulled out and destroyed so that God's word can be planted in our hearts (Mt 13:38-39; Jer 1:10). To do so, believers should use the Bible to determine the type of seed that has been sown in their hearts.

Now, let us find out what it means to be born again of the spirit and what this holy spirit really is. The holy spirit refers to God's spirit. Jesus was conceived by the seed of the holy spirit (Mt 1:18-21), and the holy spirit descended and dwelled within him (Mt 3:16).

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If we have God's seed (i.e., God's word) in us, as Jesus did, God's holy spirit will be with us as well.

God's holy spirit works wherever God's word is. The holy spirit enters and lives in the heart of a person whose heart has been cleansed with God's word. We know this through the words of Jesus when he said, "You will know at that time that I am in my Father and you are in me and I am in you," (Jn 14:10-11, 20) and when he said, "If anyone hears my voice and opens the door I will come into his home and share a meal with him, and he with me," (Rv 3:20). People who have God's word and holy spirit within them are completely changed in all respects; they are born again as children of God. Therefore, saying that a person must be born again of water and spirit to enter the kingdom of God (Jn 3:5) means that person must be changed by God's word and spirit and be born again as God's child to enter the kingdom of God.

In the time of the first coming, Jesus cursed the scribes and Pharisees, who were the pastors leading Jerusalem at that time, by telling them that the devil was their father (Jn 8:44). Although their physical bodies were born of Abraham, the father of faith, their spirits were born of Satan's seed, which represents false doctrines.

At the first coming, Jesus gave us God's word, which is the water that washes our spirits and gives us life. Today, when the whole world has become Babylon, the kingdom of demons, the water of life is delivered to us by the angel who brings the book from heaven. The angel receives from Jesus the book that Jesus receives from God. Therefore, believers must find the promised pastor, who

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receives the opened book from the angel and teaches its content (Rv 10:1-11). This is how we can be born again through the words of the new gospel. This is how we strive toward heaven, which is the hope of all believers.

Since the Bible tells us that the antichrists who left us will deceive many, even people who are chosen by Jesus must be careful. People who are deceived and who unite with the deceivers become trees of the knowledge of good and evil; their words are their fruit. Just as Eve hid in fear after betraying God, because these people have rejected the covenant they made with God they turn away and hide in fear (Gn 3:8-10). Because of the sin they have committed, they are fearful like Cain that the people they encounter might kill them (Gn 4:14). When people accept the words of the deceivers (who belong to Satan), the spirit of Satan enters them. From that time on, what is white appears black to them, and what is black appears white. Like Satan, they abandon their positions and authority (Jude 1:6), they unite with Satan's evil organization, and they oppose just like the prophecies of Rv 13 say they will. Thus, true believers must be on guard. This is why Rv 1:1-3 says that those who believe and keep the recorded words are blessed.

We at Shincheonji freely give our congregation members the blessings of Rv 2-3 and Rv 10. We provide our congregation members with the water and the holy spirit so that they can be born again. Anyone who believes can come and be born again as a new creation (2 Cor 5:17).

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29. God's kingdom of heaven

[Ref.: Mt 8:11-2, 13:24-32; Rv 14:1-5, 21:1-7]

What kind of place is God's kingdom of heaven and where is it?

The Bible refers to three kinds of heaven. All three are mentioned when Rv 21:1-3 describes the first heaven and first earth, the new heaven and new earth, and the holy city New Jerusalem of the spiritual world. To understand these three kinds of heaven, one must admit that heaven exists in both the spiritual and physical worlds. In fact, the heaven in the spiritual world descends to God's kingdom here in the physical world (Mt 4:17; Rv 21:2-3). God's kingdom in the physical world is made up of God's chosen people.

In Gn 37:9-11, Jacob's family members, who were God's chosen people, were referred to as the sun, moon and stars. The chosen people are symbolized by these heavenly bodies because they are distinguished from the world as God's people.

Roughly 2,000 years ago, God judged and brought the chosen people of Physical Israel to an end because they did not accept Jesus, whom God had sent. Jesus, who put an end to Physical Israel, established God's new kingdom of Spiritual Israel. Spiritual Israel refers to Christianity, whose people are not born of natural descent, of the flesh, or of a man's will; they are born of God (Jn 1:10-13). According to Mt 3:16-17 and Mt 4:17, God and his kingdom in the spiritual world descended on Jesus, who created Spiritual Israel. Revelation 21 describes the passing away of the first heaven and the first earth. The first heaven and earth, which disappear in Rv 21,

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symbolize the representative church and chosen people of Spiritual Israel that are judged at the end of the age.

The work of Jesus did not end with the first coming. Jesus' work finally comes to an end in the second coming when he harvests the wheat-like believers that were born of the seed of the word sown in the churches (fields) of Jesus. Through this harvest, Jesus creates God's kingdom of New Spiritual Israel. God spreads his tabernacle over this kingdom and dwells among them forever (Rv 7:15-17, 21:1-7). If Spiritual Israel, which was established from the time of Jesus' first coming, is the first heaven, then New Spiritual Israel which is created in the second coming is the new heaven that appears after the first heaven's destruction. In other words, they are the first and second heavens. The heaven of the spiritual world, which is coming down to the earth, is the third heaven (2 Cor 12:1-4).

When Jesus saw the gentile centurion's faith, he remarked that he had not seen such faith among all the people of Israel. He continued by saying that many people would come from the east and west to enter the kingdom of heaven, but that the subjects of the kingdom would be thrown into the outer darkness, where there would be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Mt 8:5-13). According to his promise, the people of Physical Israel, who were the subjects of the kingdom, were thrown out. Also according to the promise, many gentiles came from the east and west, accepted Jesus, and became the people of the new kingdom of heaven.

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According to Mt 24 and Revelation, this kind of event happens again at the time of the second coming. Just like Physical Israel, Spiritual Israel loses the right to its inheritance as the chosen people at the time of the second coming. This happens because all churches have left Jesus' words and have become corrupt. When it happens, all the churchgoers who are harvested and gathered from Spiritual Israel, which is being judged, become the kingdom of New Spiritual Israel. In other words, they become God's new kingdom and his newly chosen people (Rv 6, 7).

Jesus spoke about the kingdom of heaven in a parable when he compared it to a mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. When that seed grows, it becomes a tree so that the birds can come and nest in its branches (Mt 13:31-32). In this parable, the man that sows the seed is Jesus, the Son of Man. The mustard seed represents God's word, the field represents the churches where Jesus' gospel is preached, and the birds represent the holy spirit. Therefore, when the seed of the word sown by Jesus grows into a big organization like a tree, the holy spirit descends on that organization. That organization, where the spirit descends is the kingdom of heaven. The spirits of the martyrs and the organization of the holy spirits that descend there are symbolized in Rv 21 by the holy city New Jerusalem and in Jn 14:2-3 by the dwelling place that Jesus went to prepare for us. They are also referred to in Mt 25:34 as the kingdom that is prepared as an inheritance for the sheep-like believers.

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Spiritual Israel, which was centered around Jesus and the twelve disciples at the first coming, was the kingdom of the first heaven. The twelve tribes of New Spiritual Israel, which are created when people receive the seal of God according to the prophecies in Rv 7 and 14, are the kingdom of the new heaven. In Rv 21:1, this is described as the appearance of the new heaven and earth (i.e., Shincheonji) after the first heaven and earth cease to exist.

In the time of the Old Testament, God dwelt within the tabernacle that Moses built according to what he saw in the spiritual world. In the time of the second coming, which is today, the spiritual holy city of New Jerusalem descends on Shincheonji, which has been created according to the organization that exists in heaven. God's tabernacle is finally with his people, and God himself dwells among them (Rv 21:1-3). When the spirits and flesh unite (spirit and flesh uniting in a single body), paradise on earth, which God has been longing to fulfill, finally becomes a reality.

Shincheonji is today's kingdom of God that all believers must find. It is the kingdom that God planned and promised in the Bible, the kingdom he has established according to promise, and the kingdom in which he dwells for eternity. Even if people deny this they cannot alter God's plans, nor can they prevent those plans from coming to fruition. Seeing and believing in the physical reality that appears according to the prophecies is real faith; it is the faith God promised (Jn 14:29). Those who believe in the promise when it has been fulfilled attain the kingdom of heaven and eternal life.

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30. A new work, two kinds of seed, and the new covenant

[Ref.: Jer 31:22, 31:27, 31:31-33; Mt 13; Heb 8:10-13]

To what do the new work, the two kinds of seed, and the new covenant recorded in Jer 31 refer? In Jer 31, God prophesied through the prophet Jeremiah approximately 2,600 years ago what he would fulfill in the future. This prophecy was fulfilled roughly 600 years later when the virgin Mary gave birth to a son (Jesus) and held him in her arms[7].

- How long will you vacillate, you who were once like an unfaithful daughter? For I, the Lord, promise to bring about something new on the earth, something as unique as a woman protecting a man! (Jer 31:22)

- "Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and with the seed of beast." (Jer 31:27, NASB)

- 31"Indeed, a time is coming," says the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah ... 33But I will make a new covenant with the whole nation of Israel after I plant them

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7 – The NET version of Jer 31:22 says, "For I, the LORD, promise to bring about something new on the earth, something as unique as a woman *protecting* a man!" Instead of the word *protecting,* other English versions use *surround* or *encompass*. The Korean Bible uses the word *ahnda* (안다), which means *to hold a person in one's arms, embrace, hug, or cuddle.*

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> back in the land," says the Lord. "I will put my law within them and write it on their hearts and minds. I will be their God and they will be my people." (Jer 31:31-33)

The birth of Jesus Christ to a woman through the seed of the holy spirit marked the beginning of God's spiritual chosen people. The coming of Jesus brought an end to Physical Israel, which was born of the bloodline of Abraham. It also brought an end to Moses' law and to the period of the Old Testament prophets (Lk 16:16). The new work that God promised was accomplished when Jesus gave anyone who believed in him the right to become God's son (Jn 1:9-13) and when Jesus established the twelve tribes of Spiritual Israel through these new followers.

In addition, Jesus sowed the seed of the gospel. This is why he compared the kingdom of heaven to a person who sowed good seed in his field. After this seed had been sown, however, when people were sleeping, the enemy (the devil) came to scatter weeds among the wheat (Mt 13:24-25). The good seed represents God's words as taught by Jesus, who was born of the holy spirit. The weeds represent the false teachings taught by the Pharisees and scribes, who were the pastors of Satan. Jesus' field represents the church of Jesus where God's seed was sown (Lk 8:11; Mt 13:24-30, 13:36-39; 1 Cor 3:9).

The seed of man, which was promised in Jer 31:27, refers to the seed of the Son of Man and represents the word of God that Jesus preached. The seed of beasts represents the words of the devil. Revelation describes the devil as a beast (a dragon and a

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serpent—Rv 20:2). According to the terms used in Mt 13, the two types of seed in Jer 31 are the good seed and the weeds.

The two types of seed God promised through Jeremiah were sown in the houses of Israel and Judah at the time of Jesus. The houses of Israel and Judah symbolize God's chosen people at that time—the church of Jesus. After Jesus came, Christians became God's chosen people, and Jesus preached God's word to them.

The prophecy in Jer 31:27 foreshadows the fact that God's words and Satan's words coexist in the Christian church, not in the world of the unbelieving gentiles. Since the words and doctrines of Satan are in the church, it is the Christians, and not the unbelievers or people of other religions, who must take care to avoid Satan's doctrines.

On the night of Passover, just before he was crucified, Jesus set up a new covenant with his disciples through his blood and said that he would not drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when he drinks it anew with them in the Father's kingdom (Mt 26:26-29). This fulfilled the prophecies God made through Jeremiah 600 years before Christ that mentioned the creation of a new covenant.

Where, then, is the kingdom of God where the new Passover wine can be found? It is Shincheonji, because God's kingdom of the spiritual world, the holy city New Jerusalem, descends upon the new heaven and new earth (Rv 21:1-2).

At the time of the second coming, when the light of life has been extinguished and the world is plunged into the darkness of spiritual night (Mt 24:29-30, 24:42-43; 1 Thes 5:2; Rv 16:15), Jesus comes like

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a thief and commands his angels to harvest. These harvesting angels go to work in the Christian church, which is Jesus' field. They bring the wheat-like believers, who are spiritually awake in terms of the word, to Mt. Zion—to Shincheonji (Mt 3:12, 24:29-31; Rv 14:1-5).

At the time of harvest, the people who choose to stay in the field instead of being harvested will receive judgment. Matthew 13 describes this judgment when it says that the harvesting angels collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned (Mt 13:30-39). Adam's world came to an end in the time of Noah, and Noah's world came to an end in the time of Moses. The world of Physical Israel, which was based on Moses' law, came to an end at the time of the first coming of Jesus. In the same way, Spiritual Israel comes to an end at the time of the second coming, which is also known as the time of the harvest. Please refer to the section that explains Rv 14:14-20 for more information about the harvest and the final judgment.

The new covenant (Jer 31:31-32) is not like the covenant established during Moses' time (Ex 19:5-6). This new covenant was established by Jesus (Lk 22:20; Mt 26:26-29) approximately 600 years after God promised it through Jeremiah. The people who must keep this new covenant are not the people of Physical Israel, but the people of Spiritual Israel at the time of the first coming and the people of New Spiritual Israel at the time of the second coming. This is because the new covenant, which Jesus promised, is a prophecy that will be fulfilled in the future. A prophecy for the future can only be believed and kept by recording God's law

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(word) in our hearts and minds (Jer 31:33). How can anyone see and believe in the fulfillment of the prophecies without knowing the words of the prophecies (the new covenant) for themselves? Those who understand, believe, and keep the new covenant that has been promised will have their sins atoned and they will become the people with whom God dwells (Heb 8:10-13).

According to the explanation above, all three things God prophesied in Jer 31 were fulfilled at the first coming of Jesus, and the results of their fulfillment will appear at the second coming.

31. The new covenant and the Passover meal

[Ref.: Mt 26:26-29; Lk 22:14-20; Heb 8:7-13]

What are the new covenant and the Passover meal? The new covenant is not like the one that God made with the Israelites when he delivered them out of Egypt. It is the covenant Jesus newly established through his blood (Heb 8:9; Lk 22:20). The Passover meal mentioned in the reference scriptures is not the lamb meat the Israelites ate when they left Egypt. It is the blood and flesh of Jesus through which Jesus and his disciples made a covenant on the night of Passover right before the crucifixion. In the time of the first coming, the Passover meal was the spiritual lamb—Jesus—and his words (Lk 22:14-20). In the time of the second coming, people will be able to eat another Passover meal through Jesus (Mt 26:29).

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First, let us find out more about the new covenant. The fact that it is called the *new* covenant means there must be an *old* covenant. The new covenant is different from the old covenant. Paul referred to the Old Testament law as the first covenant, and he said that Jesus established the new covenant because there was a problem with the first covenant (Heb 8:7-13).

The new covenant that Jesus established refers to the promised words of the New Testament. What did Jesus promise in the New Testament? He promised to atone for the sins of those who believe in him and to give them eternal life (Jn 3:16). He promised to give the holy spirit to those who believe and who receive atonement (Acts 2:1-3). He promised to prepare a dwelling place for us before returning (Jn 14:2-3; Mt 25:31-34). He promised to harvest the wheat-like believers who are born of the seed of the word that was sown in the earth (Rv 14:14-16). He promised to open the seven seals of the sealed book in God's hand and to make its contents known to the world (Rv 5, 6, 7, 8, 10). He promised to send the advocate in Jesus' name—the holy spirit who speaks on behalf of Jesus (Jn 14:16-17, 14:26). He promised to give the food of eternal life to the one who overcomes and to allow the one who overcomes to sit with him on his throne (Rv 2, 3). He promised to descend to the earth after the events of betrayal and destruction (2 Thes 2:1-3). He promised to create God's kingdom by placing God's seal on the 144,000 people of the twelve tribes and by gathering the great multitude dressed in white (Rv 7, 14). We must record all of these

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promises in our hearts and minds so that we can believe when they are fulfilled (Heb 8:10; Jn 14:29).

We must believe in all of Jesus' promises, including those listed above, so that we can keep them to the end.

Let us reflect on the night of the Passover as it happened roughly 2,000 years ago when Jesus established the new covenant. The Passover of the Old Testament was designated as a feast so the Israelites would remember the night they left Egypt by eating the lamb and unleavened bread. On the night of the exodus from Egypt, they were able to escape the plague on Egypt by eating the lamb's meat and putting its blood on their door posts according to God's command (Ex 12).

From the moment Jesus began to preach the gospel, however, physical food was no longer the appropriate type of Passover meal. Jesus himself became the Passover lamb (1 Cor 5:7), and since that time, Jesus' words became the true spiritual Passover meal. Matthew 26:26-28 describes the events on the night of Passover when Jesus established the new covenant:

> [26]While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after giving thanks he broke it, gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat, this is my body." [27]And after taking the cup and giving thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you, [28]for this is my blood, the blood of the covenant, that is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." (Mt 26:26-28)

Jesus gave his disciples the bread and called it his body. He gave them the cup of wine and called it his blood, the blood of the

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covenant (Mt 26:26-28; Lk 22:17-20). He told his disciples to eat the bread and drink the wine. The blood and flesh of Jesus are the true food and the true drink (Jn 6:51-58) that believers must eat to attain eternal life. How, then, can we eat the blood and flesh of Jesus? Eating Jesus' flesh and blood is listening to and believing in the words of Jesus, who came as the word made flesh. It also includes believing that Jesus bore the cross on our behalf to atone for our sins.

After this Jesus said, "I tell you, from now on I will not drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it anew with you in my Father's kingdom," (Mt 26:29).

Jesus figuratively referred to himself as the true vine (Jn 15:1), which is why Jesus' words can be compared to wine. On the night of Passover 2,000 years ago, Jesus and his disciples, who were seated with him for dinner, drank the wine as the true Passover food. That wine represented the words of Jesus' testimony regarding the Old Testament prophecies and their physical fulfillment.

After the night of Passover, it was time for Jesus to bear the cross on our behalf to atone for our sins and then to return to God. Since it would no longer be possible to eat the true Passover meal after Jesus returned to heaven, Jesus said, "From now on I will not drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom," (Mt 26:29; Lk 22:18). This means that when Jesus returns, we are again able to eat the new Passover meal and drink the new wine.

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When and where does God's kingdom, which is the place we can eat the new Passover meal, come? This place is Mt. Zion where the 144,000 firstfruits are gathered (Rv 14:1) at the time of the Lord's return. The first epistle of Peter says, "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of his own," (1 Pt 2:9). According to this passage, God's kingdom on earth is his people. God has appointed us as his kingdom and priests (Rv 1:6, 5:10). The 144,000 people gathered at Mt. Zion are the "saints" who are harvested with the words of the book Jesus unsealed and opened. According to Rv 14:1, the names of God and of the Lamb are written on their foreheads, signifying that they belong to God.

These 144,000 people learn the new song and sing in front of God's throne, in front of the four living creatures, and in front of the 24 elders (Rv 14:1-3). This new song is like the new wine. It is the word of testimony regarding the physical fulfillment of the prophecies Jesus gave in the New Testament. Just as the words that testified about the physical fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies were the true Passover meal the disciples ate at the time of the first coming, Jesus' words that testify about the physical fulfillment of the New Testament prophecies (including Revelation) become the new Passover meal at the time of the second coming. This testimony is the new song that is sung at Mt. Zion.

Therefore, all believers must come to Mt. Zion (Shincheonji) where God's spiritual kingdom descends. In order to attain salvation and eternal life, all believers must eat this true new Passover

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meal that Jesus promised on the evening he established the new covenant.

32. The blood of the new covenant and a new thing

[Ref.: Jer 31:31-32; Mt 26:26-29; Heb 10:1-18; Jn 6:51-57; Rv 2:17, 10]

What is the blood of Jesus Christ's new covenant? Jesus said that he would drink something anew with us in his Father's kingdom. What is this new thing? When, where, and through whom can we drink it?

First, let us find out when Jesus established the new covenant.

God spoke through Jeremiah saying, "Indeed, a time is coming, when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah." God proclaimed that the new covenant would not be like the covenant he had made at the time of the exodus (Jer 31:31-32). This prophecy was fulfilled through Jesus at the time of the first coming right before he was crucified. Jesus established the new covenant at the last supper on the evening of Passover (Mt 26:26-29).

✥ [26]While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after giving thanks he broke it, gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat, this is my body." [27]And after taking the cup and giving thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you, [28]for this is my blood, the blood of the covenant, that is poured out for many for the forgiveness of

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> sins. [29]I tell you, from now on I will not drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." (Mt 26:26-29)

What, then, does the blood of the new covenant signify?

The descendants of Israel, who were party to the first covenant (i.e., the Old Testament), kept the Passover by killing a lamb, eating unleavened bread, and drinking wine. After Jesus set up the new covenant, however, physical food could no longer act as the Passover meal. John 6 reveals that Jesus—his flesh and blood—is the living bread from heaven. Anyone who eats his flesh and drinks his blood has eternal life and will be raised up on the last day. Jesus' flesh and blood are the true food and the true drink of the Passover (Jn 6:51-58). In other words, as Jesus proclaimed the words of the gospel, those words became the true Passover meal. This is why Paul wrote that Jesus himself became the Passover Lamb (1 Cor 5:7).

At the time of the first coming, Jesus—the Lamb and the true vine—fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament and gave the testimony of their fulfillment to the Israelites as food. On Passover night, Jesus broke bread and drank wine with his disciples. As he set up the new covenant, he said, "I tell you, from now on I will not drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom," (Mt 26:29).

When is this day that Jesus spoke of when he will drink the new wine of the Passover with his disciples in his Father's kingdom? To what does the new thing, namely the new wine, refer?

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That day is the day when the prophecies of the New Testament are fulfilled—the time of the Lord's second coming. Just as Jesus fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament and testified about them, he fulfills the prophecies in the New Testament and testifies about them as well. If spiritual wine refers to the words that testify about the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies, then new spiritual wine refers to the words that testify about the fulfillment of the New Testament prophecies that occurs at the time of the second coming (today).

Where does the kingdom of God, where we can drink the new wine, descend?

When the Lord returns, God's kingdom descends upon Mt. Zion where the one who overcomes is located. Revelation 14 testifies that the Lamb (Jesus) dwells on Mt. Zion where the 144,000 people of the twelve tribes are gathered. Thus, it is clear that the place where these people are gathered is God's kingdom. These 144,000 people learn the new song and sing it before God's throne, before the four living creatures, and before the 24 elders.

The new song refers to the words that proclaim the fulfillment of the New Testament prophecies. In other words, the new song is the new spiritual wine that we are drinking today. Those who sing the new song are the believers who are harvested from the north, south, east, and west (Lk 13:29; Mt 24:31) and who are sealed by God's and Jesus' name (Rv 7). These are those who eat the hidden manna, which is the new spiritual food Jesus promised to give to the one who overcomes in Rv 2:17.

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Through whom can we drink this new wine (the new song)? The new wine is given by the promised pastor (the one who overcomes). This promised pastor has eaten the opened book he received from the angel (Rv 10), who, in turn, received it from Jesus. Matthew 13:52 says, "Every expert in the law who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his treasure what is new and old." What is "old" refers to the Old Testament and its fulfillment, and what is "new" refers to the New Testament and its fulfillment. Whoever believes and obeys Jesus' promises drinks the new wine in God's kingdom and lives eternally.

Here at Shincheonji Church of Jesus, the promised pastor has seen the fulfillment of the New Testament promises and is testifying about that fulfillment. He has also received the manna that Jesus promised and he is feeding it to our congregation members. Our members are first learning and then testifying about how the prophecies have been fulfilled; they are learning and singing the new song. All believers are welcome to come, eat without cost, and sing the new song with us.

33. Those who persecute and those who are persecuted

[Ref.: Dt 30:19-20; Mt 5:10-12; Jn 15:18-24; Rv 21:8; Mt 7:15-20; Gal 4:29; Acts 7:51-53]

To whom do those who persecute and those who are persecuted each belong? What is the final outcome for each of these groups?

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During the 6,000 years of biblical history, those who persecute have belonged to the devil, and those who are persecuted have belonged to God.

Although it has been under Satan's control (Mt 4:8-9; Lk 4:5-6) for the 6,000 years that have passed since Adam sinned, God—the creator of heaven and earth—has been working to this very day to restore his creation.

Every person God chose to send over the ages—every person who has conveyed God's will—has been killed in a wretched manner. In Rv 6:9-11, the souls of these martyrs cry out to God from under the altar in the spiritual world asking him to avenge their blood. In response, God promised them vengeance on their enemies.

Who rules over a world so wicked that it crucified Jesus, who came in the name of God? Is this world really the haunt of venomous serpents? People prefer lies to the truth. They call black "white" and white "black"; they call evil "good" and good "evil." They turn darkness to light and light to darkness; they turn bitter to sweet and sweet to bitter. They consider the righteous wicked and the wicked righteous (Is 5:20). Who is responsible for the condition of our world?

Imagine the heart of a person carrying the gospel to the world. They go out as if they were a sinner, as a thief who has to hold his breath for fear of being captured. How can this dark world understand? We think, "How should I start speaking so that people will understand and be changed? Will they label me a heretic and expel

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me from their midst?" Who can possibly understand even a little of the heart of the pastor sent to deliver the word of eternal life?

At the time of the first coming, John the Baptist, who was the messenger who prepared the way for the Lord, proclaimed in the desert, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near!" (Mt 3:2). He also said to the Israelites, who were the chosen ones that had been corrupted by the teachings and customs of men, "Even now the ax is laid at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire," (Mt 3:10). Jesus declared, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near," (Mt 4:17). He also said that on the day of judgment people would have to give an account for every worthless word they have spoken, because it is by our words that we are either justified or condemned (Mt 12:34-37). Jesus said, "Watch out for false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are voracious wolves. You will recognize them by their fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire," (Mt 7:15-20).

❖ 34Offspring of vipers! How are you able to say anything good, since you are evil? For the mouth speaks from what fills the heart. 35The good person brings good things out of his good treasury, and the evil person brings evil things out of his evil treasury. 36I tell you that on the day of judgment, people will give an account for every worthless word they speak. 37For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned. (Mt 12:34-37)

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Surprisingly, most of the people guilty of persecuting or killing the prophets, Jesus, and his disciples were the Jewish people and their pastors who claimed to be the most orthodox of all (Acts 7:51-53; Mt 23:33-36). In heaven, there are two kinds of spirits: holy spirits that belong to God and evil spirits that belong to Satan. The pastors ruled by God's spirit speak God's words and do good, but the pastors ruled by Satan speak secular words and do evil. Those who belong to the devil persecute God's people, and those who belong to God are persecuted (Gal 4:29; Jn 15:18-24). Past or present, it has always been this way. The established pastors of the Old Testament period condemned the prophets, and the established pastors of the New Testament condemned Jesus and his apostles calling them heretics that belonged to the devil. They lied about them in order to persecute them. If they had been born of God, they would have loved those who belonged to God. Instead, because they were born of the devil, they persecuted just like the devil (1 Jn 4:5-8; Mt 5:10-12).

- [51]You stubborn people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are always resisting the Holy Spirit, like your ancestors did! [52]Which of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute? They killed those who foretold long ago the coming of the Righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become! [53]You received the law by decrees given by angels, but you did not obey it. (Acts 7:51-53)

- [33]You snakes, you offspring of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell? [34]For this reason I am sending you prophets

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and wise men and experts in the law, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town, [35]so that on you will come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. [36]I tell you the truth, this generation will be held responsible for all these things! (Mt 23:33-36)

- But just as at that time the one born by natural descent persecuted the one born according to the Spirit, so it is now. (Gal 4:29)

- [18]If the world hates you, be aware that it hated me first. [19]If you belonged to the world, the world would love you as its own. However, because you do not belong to the world, but I chose you out of the world, for this reason the world hates you. [20]Remember what I told you, "A slave is not greater than his master." If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they obeyed my word, they will obey yours too. [21]But they will do all these things to you on account of my name, because they do not know the one who sent me. [22]If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin. But they no longer have any excuse for their sin. [23]The one who hates me hates my Father too. [24]If I had not performed among them the miraculous deeds that no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin. But now they have seen the deeds and have hated both me and my Father. (Jn 15:18-24)

The disciples were expelled from their homes, schools, work, and country for believing in Jesus' words. They proclaimed the gospel

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as they wandered from place to place and even sacrificed their lives for the Lord. Anyone who reads the four gospels, Acts, and the epistles should be moved to tears because of their pain and work. Will God just sit idly by, watching the martyrs' sacrifices without saying a word? The blood of the prophets and the apostles has been pooling for too long. God will take vengeance on his enemy the devil. Now is the time to fulfill God's will. When the spirits of the martyrs petition God to avenge their blood in Rv 6:9-11, God says that he will grant their request at an appointed time.

We at Shincheonji have been persecuted and labeled a cult just as Jesus was at the time of the first coming. Why are we persecuted? We are persecuted for the revelation of the holy spirit (Rv 10) which the persecutors could not receive. We are persecuted because we have created the twelve tribes (Rv 7), because we give away free theological education (Rv 1:1-2, 22:17), and because we are revealing the nature of what is true and what is false (Gn 1:6-8) by testifying about the fulfillment of Revelation (Rv 1:1-2, 22:16). Since God dwells with us, love and truth come from Shincheonji and fill the entire world.

God commanded us to love him, obey his words, and choose life so that we and our descendants may live (Dt 30:19-20). Today, all believers must look only to the Bible. No believer should go against God's will and persecute others. We must instead, do good (Mt 7:1-5). Those who are persecuted and who suffer for God, for Jesus, and for testifying God's words will resurrect, receive eternal life, and live with God eternally in the paradise of heaven

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(Mt 5:10-12; Rv 20:4-6). On the other hand, however, those who have done nothing but persecute and commit evil deeds since the fall of Adam will be thrown into the lake of fire (i.e., the second death) on the day of the final judgment. They will suffer for eternity (Rv 21:8, 20:12-15).

- [1]Do not judge so that you will not be judged. [2]For by the standard you judge you will be judged, and the measure you use will be the measure you receive. [3]Why do you see the speck in your brother's eye, but fail to see the beam of wood in your own? [4]Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye,' while there is a beam in your own? [5]You hypocrite! First remove the beam from your own eye, and then you can see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye. (Mt 7:1-5)

- [10]Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to them. [11]Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you and say all kinds of evil things about you falsely on account of me. [12]Rejoice and be glad because your reward is great in heaven, for they persecuted the prophets before you in the same way. (Mt 5:10-12)

- [12]And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne. Then books were opened, and another book was opened – the book of life. So the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to their deeds. [13]The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and Death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each one was judged according to his deeds. [14]Then Death and Hades

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were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death—the lake of fire. [15]If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, that person was thrown into the lake of fire. (Rv 20:12-15)

Although God has been working through *his* people for the past 6,000 years since the fall of Adam, the devil has also been working through *his* people. In every generation, the devil killed and persecuted the messengers appointed by God to prevent them from gaining a foothold on the earth. He even killed God's son Jesus and Jesus' disciples. The Bible tells us, however, that God will kill those who killed the prophets and Jesus at the time of the second coming (Lk 20:9-18).

The devil did not enter and work through the Buddhists or the Confucianists in every generation. Instead, the devil worked within God's church. The devil entered the authority figures of the churches of each generation and used them to either label as a cult or kill the one sent by God. According to God's word, it is possible to distinguish the pastors of Satan when you see them persecute and condemn those who act and believe according to the Bible. Similarly, we can distinguish the one who belongs to God because he is persecuted for righteousness. Jesus said that the same persecution he experienced would also occur at the time of his return. When Revelation is fulfilled, the evil spirits come out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet before going to the kings (pastors) of the earth to gather them for the battle on the great day of God (i.e., judgment day) (Rv 16:13-14). Since this is what the Bible

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says, the demons from around the world must gather where the twelve tribes of Shincheonji are created today according to the Bible. This is where the battle of persecution must take place. We at Shincheonji are fighting the devil.

May those without sin persecute and criticize (Mt 5:10-12, 7:1-5). Where does the Bible tell us that we should persecute and criticize others? Pray for sinners. Forgive and bless them. This is the will of God and this is Jesus' teaching. This is the righteousness that all believers must keep. God gave his only begotten son for the lives of sinners; Jesus gave up his body for the sake of sinners. Jesus said to the woman who committed adultery, "I do not condemn you either. Go, and from now on do not sin anymore," (Jn 8:1-11). This is the love of God and Jesus. The Bible tells us to love and forgive. If you persecute, do you not have any sins? Judge yourself using the Bible.

Even the ignorant will be born again through that which is good if they live according to the Bible. They will not become persecutors. May all people who believe in God search the Bible, unite with the truth, and become a part of the army of heaven so that they too can be victorious.

34. Distinguishing the righteous from the wicked

[Ref.: Gn 6, 7; Gal 3:11; Rv 13:10, 14:11-12]

Who are the righteous and the wicked from God's point of view?

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There was no need to distinguish the righteous from the wicked at the beginning of God's creation, because there were no wicked people. Since the time, however, when the evil spirit worked through the serpent to deceive Adam, the righteous and the wicked were divided.

Adam's world where God once dwelled became corrupt and was filled with sin and wickedness. Adam's eldest son, Cain, belonged to the evil one and ended up killing his brother Abel (Gn 4:8; 1 Jn 3:12). The descendants of Adam, who were the sons of God, united with the daughters of people who did not believe in God (Gn 6:1-4). Right before God destroyed those wicked people with the flood, God told Noah, who was considered the only righteous man at the time, to build an ark that would save his family (Gn 6, 7). After Noah's descendants were filled with sin and wickedness, God called Abraham and Moses out from among them. God set Jesus apart from the disobedient world of Physical Israel and appointed him to lead. Finally, God chose the one who overcomes—the promised pastor—from the world of Spiritual Israel, which is facing the end of its age. This promised pastor of God has now established Shincheonji and is gathering its wheat-like believers.

In every generation throughout biblical history, God chose a new leader to establish a new world that replaced each former world when it had turned to wickedness.

In every generation, God regarded the remaining righteous people as his chosen seed that would create a new world. Each new world, however, only lasted a short time because God's chosen

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people consistently were corrupted and turned to evil. Since the beginning, this world has been continuously divided in two: into the forces of good and evil, into God's and Satan's kingdoms. This constant division is the reason for God's repeated cycles of creation and re-creation.

The Bible tells us that the righteous are those who follow God's statutes and obey his regulations (Ez 18:9). It also tells us that a righteous person walks in integrity (Prv 20:7). The Bible laments, though, that there is not a person on earth who is so righteous that he or she continually does good without sinning (Ecc 7:20). Romans 3:10 follows the same line: "There is no one righteous, not even one."

We can, however, become righteous through faith (Gal 3:11). Paul said that God considered Abraham righteous because of Abraham's faith (Rom 4:2-3). God regards as righteous the one who believes in him and obeys his words. If a righteous person leaves righteousness, however, and decides to commit evil deeds, the righteous deeds he once performed are not remembered (Ez 3:20). A righteous person who sins dies because of that sin (Ez 18:26).

In Rv 13, the beast from the sea (the beast with seven heads and ten horns that represents the group of the dragon) enters the Tabernacle Temple (the tabernacle of heaven). After entering, this group slanders God, takes over the tabernacle (heaven), and rules over its congregation. At that time, everyone whose name has not been written in the book of life since the creation of the world and all those who live on the earth will worship the beast

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(i.e., the gentile pastors). Those who worship the beast and his image will have no rest day or night, and neither will anyone who receives the mark of the beast's name (Rv 14:11). At this point, the beast, which represents the group of the dragon (Satan), and those who worship and receive the mark of the beast are all wicked. Since this time of testing is difficult to overcome, God encouraged that his people should maintain steadfast faith and endurance (Rv 13:10, 14:12). When these events occur, the righteous, who follow and act according to God's words, will endure to the end without forsaking their faith.

According to Rv 22, those who wash their robes receive the right to enter heaven (Rv 22:14). Clean robes are like wedding clothes (fine linen) and they represent righteous acts (Rv 19:7-8; Mt 22:1-14). The white clothes in Rv 3 have the same meaning (Rv 3:4-5, 3:18). Only the righteous can enter heaven. Believers facing the end of the age must try and be born again through righteous acts and God's word in order to become the people of heaven.

We at Shincheonji Church of Jesus are testifying about these two groups—the righteous and the wicked mentioned in the book of Revelation—because we have seen and heard their true identities at the location they were revealed.

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35. The reasons Jesus bore the cross

[Ref.: Ps 40; Mt 26:2, 26:18-28, 26:39-56; Heb 10:1-18; Gal 2:16-20; Jn 14:20]

Why did God send his son Jesus to bear the cross? Jesus was sent to rid people of their sins. Our sins must be atoned for us to receive eternal life and so that God, who left humanity because of its sins, can return once more and unite with us.

There are three kinds of sin: original sin, hereditary sin, and personal sin. It is not the animals—oxen or lambs—that have sin. It is people who commit sins, which is why people can be considered vessels of sin. Although God left his people because of their sins (Gn 6:3), God will return when people's sins are resolved. God used the flood to destroy Adam's world that had sinned, and then he appointed righteous Noah to lead. Later, God appointed Abraham and Moses. God gave Moses the law so that the Israelites could keep it. During the time of the Old Testament, people offered sacrifices for the forgiveness of their sins by sprinkling the blood of young bulls and lambs on the altar and on themselves (Ex 24:5-8). Their sins, however, were not atoned because neither the law nor the sacrifices they offered could make them perfect. In fact, God did not desire sacrifices, burnt offerings, or sin offerings, which were given according to the law. Instead, to resolve the problem of sin, God prepared a righteous body for sacrifice—Jesus Christ. Jesus said that he came to do the Father's will as recorded in the

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Old Testament (Heb 10:1-18; Ps 40:6-8). That will was that Jesus would bear the cross to atone for the sins of all people.

✥ [1]For the law possesses a shadow of the good things to come but not the reality itself, and is therefore completely unable, by the same sacrifices offered continually, year after year, to perfect those who come to worship. [2]For otherwise would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers would have been purified once for all and so have no further consciousness of sin? [3]But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year after year. [4]For the blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sins. [5]So when he came into the world, he said, "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me. [12]But when this priest had offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, he sat down at the right hand of God, [13]where he is now waiting until his enemies are made a footstool for his feet. [14]For by one offering he has perfected for all time those who are made holy. [15]And the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us, for after saying, [16]"This is the covenant that I will establish with them after those days, says the Lord. I will put my laws on their hearts and I will inscribe them on their minds," [17]then he says, "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no longer." [18]Now where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin. (Heb 10:1-18)

Why did Jesus, who had no sin, have to carry the cross? There are two major reasons.

First, Jesus bore the sins of all people on their behalf. Jesus, who was a righteous man without sin, shed his blood on the cross and died to atone for our sins. This is why it is through faith in the blood

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of the cross that our sins are forgiven; it is through faith that our sins can be atoned and we can become righteous.

❖ [16]Yet we know that no one is justified by the works of the law but by the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. And we have come to believe in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by the faithfulness of Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no one will be justified. [17]But if while seeking to be justified in Christ we ourselves have also been found to be sinners, is Christ then one who encourages sin? Absolutely not! [18]But if I build up again those things I once destroyed, I demonstrate that I am one who breaks God's law. [19]For through the law I died to the law so that I may live to God. [20]I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So the life I now live in the body, I live because of the faithfulness of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (Gal 2:16-20)

Jesus prayed on the mountain of Gethsemane before he bore the cross to ask God for another way. He wanted to avoid crucifixion and asked if it was possible to resolve the sins of mankind without bearing the cross. Jesus, however, surrendered and asked God to carry out his own will rather than Jesus' will (Mt 26:36-45). With the cross, which was the bitter cup of death, before him, Jesus prayed the same words three times. As he prayed, his sweat fell like drops of blood to the ground (Lk 22:44). What an astonishing situation this was! This was the prayer of a righteous person, a 33-year-old man in the prime of his youth who was about to face a wretched punishing death for the will of God and the sins of mankind.

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- Going a little farther, he threw himself down with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if possible, let this cup pass from me! Yet not what I will, but what you will." (Mt 26:39)

- He went away a second time and prayed, "My Father, if this cup cannot be taken away unless I drink it, your will must be done." (Mt 26:42)

If, instead of surrendering to God's will, Jesus had called on the legions of angels in heaven's army to strike those who were trying to kill him, the sins of mankind would have never been resolved (Mt 26:46-54). It would have been just like Moses' time on the night of Passover. Instead, however, when Peter struck the ear of the high priest's slave, Jesus told Peter to sheathe his sword, and then he said, "Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?" (Jn 18:11).

- [53]Or do you think that I cannot call on my Father, and that he would send me more than twelve legions of angels right now? [54]How then would the scriptures that say it must happen this way be fulfilled? (Mt 26:53-54)

- But Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword back into its sheath! Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?" (Jn 18:11)

Jesus said that only those who eat his flesh and drink his blood have eternal life (Jn 6:51-55). This is the same flesh and blood by which Jesus made the new covenant with his disciples while breaking the bread and sharing the wine on the night of Passover before he bore the cross (Mt 26:2, 18:20, 26:28). Jesus made a new

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covenant with his disciples saying, "From now on I will not drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." Since Jesus referred to himself as the vine (Jn 15:1-5), the products of that vine, which are Jesus' flesh and blood, represent Jesus' words that give life.

The kingdom Jesus mentioned that belongs to his father is the nation of New Spiritual Israel, which is composed of the 144,000 people of the twelve tribes at Mt. Zion (Rv 7, 14). These people are purchased by blood (Rv 5:9-10) at the time of Revelation's fulfillment. These 144,000 people are the firstfruits, and they sing the new song, which can only be learned at Mt. Zion. This new song, which is the fulfillment of what has been promised in the New Testament, is the flesh and the blood of the new covenant, which Jesus gives us to eat. Just as Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament and fed it to his disciples, he fulfills the New Testament and feeds it to us.

Jesus said that the law and the prophets were in effect until John the Baptist (Lk 16:16). He also said that he did not come to abolish the law or the prophets, but to perfect them. He said that before heaven and earth pass away, even the smallest letter or stroke of a letter of the law would all be fulfilled (Mt 5:17-18). The law that Jesus proclaimed was the law of freedom. This law of freedom is much more profound than the laws of Moses' time. For example, under this law of freedom, people are considered guilty of murder for merely harboring in their hearts hatred toward others. Therefore, ridding our hearts of all hate is perfecting the law of freedom. It is impossible, however, to perfect this law with a body that sins. It

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is only when we are born again through the blood Jesus shed on the cross that we can become a body without sin that is capable of perfectly obeying the law of freedom.

The second reason Jesus bore the cross was to allow for God and Jesus to dwell within us as a spirit. Just as God was able to come and dwell within Jesus because he was righteous, Jesus atoned for our sins with the blood he shed on the cross because he desires to dwell within us as a spirit when we too are without sin. God left mankind because people sinned (Gn 6:3). If God, who has no sin, were to enter and unite with sinful people, then God himself would have sin. Because a holy spirit cannot reside with sinners, God had no choice but to leave his people. Thus, the fact that Jesus bore the cross to resolve the problem of sin finally allows God to return to and unite with his people.

Our sins could not be atoned through our own actions under the law, and this is why the holy spirit was never able to descend upon people. We can be justified, however, by believing that our sins are atoned by the blood Jesus shed on the cross. Then, when we no longer have sin, the holy spirit descends (Gal 2:16, 3:5-11). This is the fulfillment of what Jesus said: "On that day just as the Father is in me, I will be in you," (Jn 14:10, 20; Rom 8:9; Rv 3:20). When Jesus' holy spirit dwells in us and leads us, we are finally able to avoid sin and carry out purely righteous acts. This is what it means to perfect the law; this is the completion of the law. Before Jesus bore the cross, the holy spirit could not be with us (Jn 7:37-39), but after Jesus bore the cross, the holy spirit descended to people

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(Acts 2:1-4). This is evidence that our sins were atoned when Jesus bore the cross.

The sins of humanity cannot be resolved even with all the money, authority, and knowledge that exists between heaven and earth. Only the cross and Jesus' blood can resolve sin, and only those who believe in the cross can be atoned. Therefore, walking the path of Jesus Christ is believing in the redeeming power of the cross, having our sins atoned, and receiving the spirit of Jesus. The spirit of Jesus enters us, unites with us, and lives together with us forever (Gal 2:20). Jesus' blood was indeed the true food and true drink that liberated us from our sins. It was the blood of the covenant that united us with God. There is no greater love in the world than this. Within this great love, let us forgive one another and become the very embodiment of truth and peace.

We in Shincheonji are giving the new wine, which is the new blood and flesh of Jesus, that Jesus promised in Mt 26:26-29. This is the hidden manna of Rv 2 and the words of Jesus' blood written into the scroll that was sealed in Rv 5 but that has since been opened.

36. The spirit of Jesus, who bore the cross

[Ref.: Jn 14:20; Rv 3:20; Rom 8:9, 8:19-27; Jn 1:32, 10:32]

Jesus bore the cross according to God the Father's will to atone for the sins of mankind. After he bore the cross, where can the spirits of God and Jesus be found?

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God left people because of sin, but Jesus bore the cross so that both God and Jesus could return to dwell within their people. It is because Jesus bore the cross that believers can receive atonement for their sins and God's holy spirit can descend on his people once more. It is only when we believe that we are redeemed through Jesus' bearing of the cross that we are able to welcome the spirits of God and Jesus into our hearts.

Jesus said to his disciples, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the farthest parts of the earth," (Acts 1:8). According to these words, after Jesus ascended to heaven, the holy spirit came upon the disciples who were gathered in Mark's upper room. When they were filled with the spirit, it enabled them to speak in other languages (Acts 2:1-4). Paul said that people who do not have the spirit of Christ do not belong to Christ (Rom 8:9). In contrast, the spirit of Jesus comes and works through people who truly believe in Jesus. This is why the lyrics of the old hymn "What a Wonderful Change" describe how we become new people when the Lord Jesus comes into our hearts. People often claim to have received the holy spirit, but people who really have the spirit within them speak the words of heaven, not the words of the earth. A person who has received the holy spirit must be able to speak the words of heaven because God gives the holy spirit without limit (Jn 3:31-34) and because

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the holy spirit has mastered[8] all things, even the deepest things of God (1 Cor 2:10).

Before ascending to heaven Jesus said, "There are many dwelling places in my Father's house. Otherwise, I would have told you, because I am going away to make ready a place for you. And if I go and make ready a place for you, I will come again and take you to be with me, so that where I am you may be too," (Jn 14:2-3). He also said, "You will know at that time that I am in my Father and you are in me and I am in you," (Jn 14:10-11, 20). In Rv 3, Jesus said, "Listen! I am standing at the door and knocking! If anyone hears my voice and opens the door I will come into his home and share a meal with him, and he with me," (Rv 3:20). He also promised to send us the holy spirit of truth (i.e., the advocate), and that the spirit of truth would stay with us forever (Jn 14:16). Therefore, at the time of Jesus' second coming, God, Jesus, and the spirit of the advocate who comes in the name of the Lord will all be within us.

The holy spirit and the disciples, who became the firstfruits of the holy spirit at the time of Jesus' first coming, wait in earnest hope with groans that words cannot express for the appearance of the sons of God and the redemption of their bodies (Rom 8:19-27). This redemption of their bodies refers to when they receive salvation after being liberated from all sin and evil. To reach this conclusion, Jesus comes leading the troops mounted on white horses to capture

8 – Although many English versions use the word *searches*, the Korean version uses the word *tongdal* (통달 or 通達), which means *mastery* or *the possession of thorough knowledge.*

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and imprison the group of the dragon (Satan) (Rv 19:11-21, 20:2-3). When this is accomplished Jesus creates the world of Shincheonji.

✦ [19]For the creation eagerly waits for the revelation of the sons of God. [23]Not only this, but we ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we eagerly await our adoption, the redemption of our bodies. [26]In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how we should pray, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with inexpressible groanings. [27]And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes on behalf of the saints according to God's will. (Rom 8:19-27)

After waiting over 6,000 years, God and humanity are finally reunited. God, who left this world of people because of our sins, has returned because of his son Jesus' obedience. People are once more capable of serving the Father because of the grace found in Jesus' cross. Those who serve the spirit of God and the spirit of Jesus in their hearts become a part of God's family. Just as God and Jesus have become one, we too, become one with God (Jn 1:32, 10:30, 14:20).

Today, at the time of Jesus' second coming, Satan leaves this world and God, who left, returns to Shincheonji and unites with his family once more. God's family in the physical world is comprised of the 144,000 people of the twelve tribes of Shincheonji, who are sealed by God's seal, and the multitude who come out of the great tribulation dressed in robes made white by the blood of

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the Lamb (Rv 7). Their dwelling place is Shincheonji, which is the paradise of heaven where they will live together forever. Amen.

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37. The white stone given to the one who overcomes

[Ref.: Rv 2:17; Mt 21:42-44; Ex 24:12; Dn 2:44-45]

What is the white stone that the one who overcomes receives (Rv 2:17)? This stone borrows the traits of a physical stone and is figurative for God's word of judgment (i.e., the law).

- The one who has an ear had better hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers, I will give him some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and on that stone will be written a new name that no one can understand except the one who receives it. (Rv 2:17)

The one who overcomes can only receive the white stone after he fights and overcomes his enemies, who are the Nicolaitans (Satan). The white stone, which has a new name written on it, must be given by Jesus, and only the one who receives the white stone knows he has received it. Only the one who receives the white stone knows the name written on it, which is why only the one who receives the white stone can reveal this mystery. Thus, it is only by finding the one who overcomes, that others are able to know the new name written on the stone.

Let us find out, then, what this white stone, which Jesus promised to give to the one who overcomes, really is.

Stones are hard enough to be used as implements of destruction. The Bible borrows the physical qualities of a stone when it

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uses stones figuratively to represent the tools of God—people who pass judgment. Moses judged the Israelites with the law that God engraved on two stone tablets (Ex 24:12). Later, those stone tablets came to symbolize God's law. After Jesus brought his new commandments, however, the old law came to an end (Lk 16:16). This is why Paul called the law a mere elementary teacher charged with leading people to Christ (Gal 3:24).

The new commandments (New Testament) from Jesus became the new tools of judgment. Jesus said, "The one who rejects me and does not accept my words has a judge; the word I have spoken will judge him at the last day," (Jn 12:48). He also said, "Have you never read in the scriptures: 'The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. This is from the Lord, and it is marvelous in our eyes'? ... The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, and the one on whom it falls will be crushed," (Mt 21:42-44). This stone is the one who judges and the word of judgment. Jesus compared himself to a stone because he was the one passing judgment and the one who had God's law engraved on his heart (Heb 8:10).

Daniel 2:32-35 prophesies about a stone that is cut out to strike a statue. When this happens the stone breaks the statue into pieces and then becomes a huge mountain that fills the entire earth. The true identity of this stone is Jesus, which is why 1 Pt 2:4 refers to Jesus as a precious living stone.

The white stone (Rv 2:17) that Jesus (the living stone) promised to give to the one who fights and overcomes the group of Satan (the Nicolaitans) represents the law, which is the word of the New

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Testament that Jesus received from God. It is through this word that judgment is carried out. This word is also the word of the opened scroll from Rv 10, and it is by this word that the earth and the sea are judged (Jn 12:48; Rv 16).

The one who overcomes also gives the white stone, which he received from Jesus, to the twelve tribe leaders he appoints, and they judge alongside him. This means that the one who overcomes makes the twelve tribe leaders stones of judgment like himself. This is the same as when Moses gave the law he received from God to the descendants of the twelve sons of Israel who were acting as the twelve tribe leaders at the time and told them to use it to rule over the people. Twelve precious stones were affixed on each of the breast-pieces of the garments of the twelve sons of Israel who received God's law from Moses (Ex 28:2-4, 21). These twelve precious stones symbolized the twelve sons themselves (the twelve tribe leaders). The Bible also records that the twelve apostles, who received the new commandments from Jesus, are also twelve precious stones (Rv 21:14, 19-20). At the time of the second coming, Jesus strikes and judges Babylon, the kingdom of demons (Rv 18:2), with the white stone he gives to the one who overcomes and creates the everlasting kingdom of Shincheonji. This is how the prophecy of Dn 2:44-45 is completely fulfilled.

✦ [44]In the days of those kings the God of heaven will raise up an everlasting kingdom that will not be destroyed and a kingdom that will not be left to another people. It will break in pieces and bring about the demise of all these kingdoms. But it will stand forever. [45]You saw

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> that a stone was cut from a mountain, but not by human hands; it smashed the iron, bronze, clay, silver, and gold into pieces. The great God has made known to the king what will occur in the future. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is reliable. (Dn 2:44-45)

Just as Jesus was the living stone that received God's laws during the first coming, the one who overcomes—who receives from Jesus the fruit of the tree of life, the hidden manna, the white stone, and the iron scepter that rules over all nations—becomes the living stone at the second coming. Therefore, believers must unite with the one who overcomes after he receives the white stone, and like him, they must engrave God's and Jesus' laws on their hearts (Heb 8:10) to become a white stone themselves.

Who, then, is the one who overcomes and how can people find him? The one who overcomes is the one who fights against and defeats the Nicolaitans (Satan). The Nicolaitans (Satan) invade the tabernacle of the seven lampstands where the seven messengers are located. The one who fights and defeats them in this place becomes Israel and establishes the twelve tribes of New Spiritual Israel. Those who lose this battle flee this place in seven directions. This is the evidence that reveals the identity of the one who overcomes and those who are defeated. Believers can only attain salvation when they find the place where the promised one who overcomes creates the twelve tribes of New Spiritual Israel—the place of judgment, which is Shincheonji (Mt 19:28).

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38. The hidden manna

[Ref.: Ex 16-17; Jn 6; Rv 2, 10]

What is the hidden manna Jesus promised to give to the one who overcomes? The word manna refers to bread, of which there are two types: physical bread and spiritual bread. The bread mentioned here is spiritual. Let us consider, then, what this hidden manna really represents.

To understand correctly, let us first consider the manna from the Old Testament. In Ex 16, after the Israelites were led out of Egypt into the desert, God sent them manna and quail from heaven. To use this event as a prophecy for future generations, God ordered the Israelites to put some of the manna in a jar that would be kept in the Most Holy Place (Ex 16:32-33).

Things changed, however, when Jesus came to the earth and said, "I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that has come down from heaven, so that a person may eat from it and not die," (Jn 6:48-50). Jesus also said, "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats from this bread he will live forever. The bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh," (Jn 6:51). Then, Jesus said, "I tell you the solemn truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in yourselves. The one who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day," (Jn 6:53-54).

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Jesus said, "For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. The one who eats my flesh and drinks my blood resides in me, and I in him. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so the one who consumes me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven ... The one who eats this bread will live forever," (Jn 6:55-58). Finally he said, "The Spirit is the one who gives life; human nature is of no help! The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life," (Jn 6:63).

What, then, do Jesus' flesh and blood represent? Because Jesus was the word made flesh (Jn 1:14), Jesus' flesh and blood symbolize his words. Jesus' words are the food that gives life to our spirits. It is not food that satisfies the physical body. According to 1 Cor 15:51-54, those who eat this spiritual food will resurrect in the last days into an imperishable spiritual body.

The Bible records that many of Jesus' disciples turned back and stopped following him at this point because they misunderstood when Jesus claimed to be the living bread they must eat for salvation (Jn 6:60-66). Just as it was in the past, people who misunderstand this claim still turn their backs on Jesus. Those who understand as Peter did, however, will dwell in the place where the words of eternal life (spiritual food) can be found (Jn 6:68).

The hidden manna Jesus promised to give the one who overcomes represents the words Jesus gives at the time of the second coming. The manna is hidden because the events to be fulfilled in the future were recorded in figurative language—they were sealed with seven seals. This is why Jesus' flesh and blood (the wine)

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cannot be consumed until Jesus returns and eats it in the Father's kingdom (Mt 26:26-29).

Jesus spoke in parables about the secrets of heaven (Mt 13:34-35). The true meaning of the parables is hidden until they are explained; the secrets are only revealed when the prophecies are physically fulfilled. At the time of the second coming, Jesus breaks all the seals on the sealed scroll (Rv 6, 8), gives it to the promised pastor (i.e., the one who overcomes), and reveals its secrets to the world by commanding him to testify to many peoples, nations, languages, and kings (Rv 10).

The words recorded in the opened scroll are the manna the one who overcomes receives. Those who hear the word from him and believe in its physical fulfillment become the priests and people of God's kingdom (Rv 5:9-10). The manna the one who overcomes receives is the hidden manna. This hidden manna is the true food of the new Passover, about which Jesus spoke when he said that he would drink it anew in his Father's kingdom (Mt 26:26-29). At the time of the first coming, Jesus' disciples ate the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies as their Passover meal. At the time of the second coming, however, when God's kingdom comes, the fulfillment of the New Testament prophecies becomes the new Passover meal.

According to Rv 14:1-6, this new hidden manna can only be eaten at Mt. Zion, where the twelve tribes that have united with the one who overcomes are located. Thus, those who find the pastor

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who has received the scroll opened by Jesus will be able to eat the manna and attain salvation.

According to Gn 2, the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil were in the middle of the Garden of Eden. When Adam ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, his living spirit died (Gn 2:17). Jesus said that the dead spirits of anyone who eats his flesh and blood can come back to life (Jn 6:55-58, 63). Thus, spirits that have died because of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil can live again by eating the fruit (blood) of Jesus' tree of life (1 Cor 15:22). In other words, dead spirits are transformed into living spirits. This is resurrection and salvation. Jesus' words of life are the food that gives life to dead spirits. They are also the hidden manna because their true meaning was concealed until the opening of the sealed scroll.

39. The sealed book and the revelation

[Ref.: Is 29:9-14; Gal 3:23-28; Rv 5, 10]

Before Jesus came to this earth, because it was not yet time for the revealed faith, all believers were held prisoner under the law. The law acted as an elementary teacher or guardian that led people to Christ. After faith came, however, it was inappropriate for people to remain forever under the guardianship of the law. All true believers became sons of God through faith, and they were united in Christ (Gal 3:23-28).

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✥ [23]Now before faith came we were held in custody under the law, being kept as prisoners until the coming faith would be revealed. [24]Thus the law had become our guardian until Christ, so that we could be declared righteous by faith. [25]But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian. [26]For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God through faith. [27]For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. [28]There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female – for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. (Gal 3:23-28)

While Jesus was on this earth, he proclaimed what he had seen and heard in heaven. Even after he fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament and ascended to heaven, he taught his disciples many things through revelation (Gal 1:11-12). These revelations, however, were partial revelations.

Apostle John was inspired by the holy spirit and went up to the spiritual realm (heaven). There, he received a revelation regarding future events in a vision and recorded it as the book of Revelation. This is the promised revelation we must keep. Because, however, the content of John's revelation was sealed, no one knew what it meant until today.

God declared, "For I delight in faithfulness, not simply in sacrifice. I delight in acknowledging God, not simply in whole burnt offerings," (Hos 6:6). Jesus said, "Now this is eternal life—that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you sent," (Jn 17:3). He also said, "All things have been handed over to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one

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knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son decides to reveal him," (Mt 11:27). Clearly, it is only by listening to the one who has received revelation from Jesus that believers can know God, Jesus, and the pastor sent by Jesus. This is the only path to eternal life.

Let us next learn about the sealed book. Jesus gave us the book of Revelation so that we would be able to believe when all the events recorded in it are fulfilled. Revelation warns that anyone who adds to or takes away words from its content will be denied entry into heaven (Rv 22:18-19). Thus, it is critical that we learn, understand, and believe only in the true meaning of Revelation.

According to Is 29, because the entire revelation is a sealed book, neither the ignorant nor the educated are able to read it (Is 29:9-12).

❖ [9]You will be shocked and amazed! You are totally blind! They are drunk, but not because of wine; they stagger, but not because of beer. [10]For the Lord has poured out on you a strong urge to sleep deeply. He has shut your eyes (the prophets), and covered your heads (the seers). [11]To you this entire prophetic revelation is like words in a sealed scroll. When they hand it to one who can read and say, "Read this," he responds, "I can't, because it is sealed." [12]Or when they hand the scroll to one who can't read and say, "Read this," he says, "I can't read." (Is 29:9-12)

When this passage uses the word "you" it is referring to the prophets and seers who act as the leaders of the people; it refers to pastors. They stagger because God has given them an overwhelming urge to fall deep asleep. God has shut their eyes and covered

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their heads. In other words, just as the content of a sealed book is hidden from view, the meaning of the entire revelation was hidden from these pastors. Those who are ignorant cannot understand because of their ignorance, and those who are educated cannot read (or understand) because the book is sealed. Because the revelation awaits an appointed time, God commanded his people to record the revelation clearly on the tablets of their hearts so that it can be read even as we run toward our goal (Hb 2:2-3).

What, then, is the outcome for people who do not know the sealed words of revelation? Anyone who does not know the word of revelation can only teach and be taught the commands of men. Although they may draw near to God with their lips, their hearts move farther and farther away from him (Is 29:13). Although from the outside they may look like believers, from God's point of view they are gentiles. God promised to carry out an absolutely extraordinary work among these people who have learned only the teachings of men (Is 29:14).

✦ [13]The sovereign master says, "These people say they are loyal to me; they say wonderful things about me, but they are not really loyal to me. Their worship consists of nothing but man-made ritual. [14]Therefore I will again do an amazing thing for these people – an absolutely extraordinary deed. Wise men will have nothing to say, the sages will have no explanations." (Is 29:13-14)

What is this absolutely extraordinary deed? When, where, and through whom is it fulfilled? What is the meaning of revelation? When Isaiah the prophet wrote about the revelation he received

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2,700 years ago, he mentioned seeing a sealed book. This is the same as the situation roughly 2,000 years ago, when Apostle John went up to heaven and saw a vision of a book sealed with seven seals in the right hand of God. Just as Isaiah mentioned a sealed book, Rv 5:1-3 mentions a scroll that no one in heaven, on earth, or under the earth is able to open or look inside.

Today, Jesus has received this sealed book (Is 29:11; Rv 5:1), which no one could open, from God's hand (Rv 5:7). He has opened it and fulfilled it by breaking all its seals (Rv 6, 8). Jesus has given this opened book to his one promised pastor and commanded him to testify about the book's prophecies and their physical fulfillment (Rv 10). This process is revelation through physical fulfillment. When the scroll, which was once sealed, is opened and explained, those who hear it cannot help but be amazed. This is the extraordinary work that leaves the wise men and sages speechless (Is 29:14).

When the prophecies recorded in the sealed book become a physical reality, seven angels sound seven trumpets that proclaim the prophetic fulfillment (Rv 8, 9, 11). Even this occurs according to a prophecy in Mt 24:31, which states that angels will sound their trumpets upon Jesus' return. Isaiah 18:3 tells us that everyone on earth must listen when the trumpet sounds; the entire world must hear this trumpet sound in order to act according to God's will and attain salvation.

These words of the opened scroll must be testified to the devil's kingdom of Spiritual Babylon, which has captured God's people (Rv 5:9, 7:9, 10:11, 11:9, 13:7, 14:6, 17:15). Among those who have

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become slaves of Babylon (Rv 13, 12, 17, 18), those who are able to escape after hearing the words of revelation (Is 1:27; Zec 2:7; Rv 17:14, 18:4) become the 144,000 people of New Spiritual Israel and the great multitude dressed in white robes. Among these, the 144,000 people purchased as firstfruits by Jesus' blood become God's kingdom and priests (Rv 5:9-10, 14:1-5). The great multitude dressed in white have washed the robes of their hearts (Rv 7:13-14) to become the people of God's kingdom. These people become God's children through the revealed faith mentioned in Gal 3:23-28.

As discussed above, without revelation, no one can know God, Jesus, or the pastor Jesus has sent. Neither can anyone know the words of prophecy or their physical fulfillment. Those who have not received or who do not understand the words of revelation—people without the faith of revelation—have received only the teachings of men, and therefore, they cannot attain salvation. The prophets and seers mentioned in Is 29 are the pastors of the world at the time of revelation, which is today. They are amazed because the words of the sealed scroll and their physical fulfillment, which they do not know, are being testified. Whenever the pastors of this generation are asked to explain the book of Revelation, it is very clear that they do not understand it.

The teachings of men have always existed, but the words of the sealed scroll are God's secret that will be fulfilled in the future. This secret—the secret of the physical fulfillment of the prophecies—is revealed when its appointed time comes. Jesus opens the sealed scroll and fulfills according to its content. Jesus chooses

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one person—the one who overcomes—and shows him what has been fulfilled through an angel. He gives the opened scroll to the one who overcomes and makes him testify about the fulfillment of the prophecies (Rv 1:1-3; Rv 10). The physical fulfillment that has appeared according to the prophecies includes the seven messengers, the Nicolaitans (i.e., the group of the dragon—the beast with seven heads and ten horns), the male child who rules over all nations, and the newly created twelve tribes of New Spiritual Israel.

May all Christians believe in the words Jesus has revealed today and in the physical fulfillment so they may attain salvation (Rv 1:1-3).

40. The true identity of the beast—the group of the dragon

[Ref.: Rv 13, 12, 17]

What kind of group is the organization of the dragon and the beast? How can we know its true identity?

The Bible records several battles between God and Satan—between God's people and Satan's people. When the prophecies of Revelation are fulfilled, the physical embodiments of these two promised groups appear to fight against one another. This is why it is more important to understand the contents of Revelation than anything else. By understanding the prophecies of Revelation, not only can we can avoid being deceived by those who belong to Satan, we can also recognize the pastor sent by God and attain salvation by believing in his words. Revelation prophesies many

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details about the appearance and work of both Satan's pastors and God's pastor, so believers must be aware of the prophecies in order to recognize their fulfillment when the time comes.

The book of Revelation refers to the flesh and spirits that belong to either God or Satan in various figurative ways. Let us learn what kinds of animals Revelation uses to refer to the spirits and flesh (people) that belong to God. Let us also learn about the true identity of the beast and the dragon's organization (Rv 13, 12) that take over God's tabernacle.

The four living creatures before God's throne each have four faces: the face of a man in front, the face of a lion on the right, the face of an ox on the left, and the face of an eagle in back (Ez 1; Rv 4). These four living creatures represent the four archangels within God's organization in the spiritual realm.

In Rv 6 and 19, when Jesus breaks the seals, a white horse, a red horse, a black horse, and a pale horse appear after hearing the commands of the four living creatures. In the spiritual realm, these horses refer to the angels of the army of heaven, but in the physical realm, they refer to the people who belong to God.

The spirits and the flesh that belong to Satan, however, are represented by violent beasts. Revelation 9 mentions some mounted angels that have been kept ready to kill mankind. Their horses spew fire, smoke, and sulfur from their mouths, and they have snake-like tails with heads that inflict injury. In Rv 13, a beast with seven heads and ten horns comes out of the sea, receives authority from the dragon, and enters God's tabernacle (heaven). This

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beast is described as having the appearance of a leopard, a bear, and a lion because these are the types of animals that destroy the lamb-like congregation members of God's tabernacle. According to Rv 17:9-10, the seven heads of the beast are seven mountains and seven kings. Just as a mountain is a large gathering of earth, these seven mountains symbolize a church, which is an organization that gathers believers symbolized by soil. The seven kings symbolize pastors who rule over their congregation members. Thus, the seven heads of the beast represent seven pastors. Further, the fact that the beast has seven heads and ten horns means that these seven pastors from seven denominations also have other false pastors who belong to them. This beast with seven heads and ten horns is called "the abomination that causes desolation" in Mt 24. It stands in the holy place after fighting and defeating the chosen people of Jerusalem. In Rv 2 and 3, this same beast is referred to as an intruder into the church of the seven golden lampstands (i.e., the tabernacle of heaven in Rv 13). After invading the church where the seven messengers who prepare the way for the Lord are, the beast forces them to eat food that has been sacrificed to idols.

The true identity of the dragon mentioned above is the ancient serpent, the devil, and Satan (Rv 20:2). The physical embodiment of this ancient serpent, which was the wild serpent in Gn 3, is the person who receives the spirit of Satan. If the serpent from the Garden of Eden was a literal serpent, why do snakes no longer speak to us? The serpent at that time that was able to speak was

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actually a false pastor whom Satan had entered. When Satan enters a pastor he or she becomes Satan.

The serpent (Satan) that deceived Eve roughly 6,000 years ago controlled the Pharisees and teachers of the law during the time of the first coming. That same serpent even entered and worked through Judas Iscariot (Lk 22:3; Jn 13:27). This is why Jesus said, "You snakes, you offspring of vipers," to the Pharisees and teachers of the law after Satan had already entered them (Mt 23:33).

Today, during the course of Revelation's fulfillment, Satan entered and worked through the pastors of seven denominations along with the false pastors who belonged to them. This group of Satan invaded the tabernacle of the chosen people (heaven), forced its congregation members to receive the mark of the beast on their foreheads or right hands, and then destroyed the tabernacle along with all its members (Rv 13, 17). Revelation 2 calls them the Nicolaitans as well as those who claim to be Jews but are actually the synagogue of Satan. They are also referred to as Balaam and Balak, who caused the Israelites to stumble and to worship idols.

These destroyers—the group of the dragon—have invaded the tabernacle of heaven, opposed God, fought against the tabernacle's members, and destroyed them because they were ignorant of God and God's word. If they had known that the tabernacle of heaven was God's temple and that its members were God's chosen people, they would have never dared to destroy it. If these beast-like pastors had known what they were doing and what kind of spirit was inside them, they would never have embarked

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on such an evil course. Because, however, they were as ignorant of the Bible as beasts, they played the role of Satan in opposing God according to the prophecies.

No one who is consumed by a literal understanding of the Bible can understand the words that Jesus spoke figuratively. These people cannot be a part of God's kingdom; they are outsiders. In other words, they become wicked beasts that can never receive forgiveness for their sins (Mk 4:10-13).

Since we, Shincheonji Church of Jesus, have seen the physical fulfillment of the prophecies, we know who belongs to God and who belongs to Satan. We are testifying according to what we have seen and heard. Those who can recognize the group of the dragon and his beast will not receive the mark of the beast, nor will they worship any pastor who has received such a mark. Instead, they will receive God's seal and become a part of the promised twelve tribes of New Spiritual Israel, which are the people of heaven.

41. The seal of God and the mark of the beast

[Ref.: Rv 7, 13; Ez 9:4-6; Jn 3:31-34; Rv 14:1-5]

What are the seal and the mark in the title of this chapter? Seals are used to show approval and ownership. Since God has a seal, we should understand what it is, as well as when, where, and how it is used.

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Since God is the word (Jn 1:1), God's seal is his word that is sealed in people's hearts. God puts his seal on believers whom he acknowledges to be his people. People who are sealed by God have God's word recorded in their hearts and minds. At the time of the first coming, God put his seal on Jesus (Jn 6:27), but at the time of the second coming, God's angels put a seal on the foreheads of God's servants (Rv 7, 14:1).

When he came to the earth, Jesus testified about what he had seen in heaven. Hearing and accepting his testimony was acknowledging that God is truthful. God places his seal on those who acknowledge his word to be the truth, and then he regards them as his own people. Because a person who has been sealed by God has God's word in his or her heart, the word can act as evidence of whether a given person is sealed by God. This also means that God's word should naturally flow from within a person who has been sealed. The holy spirit descends upon people who have become God's possession and it dwells within them (Jn 3:31-34). According to Rv 7, the 144,000 people of the twelve tribes of New Spiritual Israel are sealed by God. As the firstfruits that are harvested at the time of the second coming, they are the people who are redeemed from the earth (Rv 14:1-5).

✦ 31The one who comes from above is superior to all. The one who is from the earth belongs to the earth and speaks about earthly things. The one who comes from heaven is superior to all. 32He testifies about what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony. 33The one who has accepted his testimony has confirmed clearly that God

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is truthful. [34]For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for he does not give the Spirit sparingly. (Jn 3:31-34)

On the other hand, placing a mark, just like sealing, is also used to show ownership and approval. Thus, receiving a mark and being sealed actually mean the same thing.

In Ez 9:4-6, God said, "Go through the city of Jerusalem and put a mark on the foreheads of the people who moan and groan over all the abominations practiced in it ... Go through the city after him and strike people down; do no let your eye pity nor spare anyone!" This is similar to what happened during the night when the Israelites were about to escape Egypt. At that time, God sent the angels and commanded them to kill the firstborn of every household whose door posts were not marked with the blood of a lamb (Ex 12).

In the time of Revelation's fulfillment, some believers receive the mark (666) of the beast's name (Rv 13:11-18). By doing so, they become a possession of the beast, a part of the group of Satan. People who receive the mark of the beast are those who listen to the teachings of the beast, receive them into their hearts, and believe them. These people will suffer eternally in the fiery lake of burning sulfur.

Shouldn't everyone desire to be sealed by God? Why would anyone receive the mark of the beast? They can only receive it because the beast does not admit to being a pastor of Satan. Just as Satan disguises himself as an angel of light, his false pastors also

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disguise themselves as servants of righteousness or as the servants of Christ (2 Cor 11:13-15).

The true identity of the beast can be discerned by reading the words of Rv 12 and 13. The beast must fulfill all the prophecies that were written about it, and its doing so is part of God's working toward the ultimate accomplishment of his will. At the time of Revelation's fulfillment, someone must witness the physical fulfillment of the beast giving its mark to a group of believers. Only those who receive this person's testimony can know the true identity of the beast.

Apostle John recorded Revelation according to the future events that he saw and heard in the spiritual world of heaven. When the testimony regarding Revelation's prophecies and their fulfillment is given, anyone who acknowledges the testimony as being true receives God's seal, becomes a part of New Spiritual Israel, and attains salvation. Revelation prophesies about the events of the second coming, and, just like the time of the first coming, these events follow a certain logic. Just as the first coming did, the second coming begins with the work of the lampstand that prepares the way. This is soon followed by the appearance of the promised pastor at the tabernacle of the seven golden lampstands. The events of Revelation include two battles between God's army and Satan's army, but God is ultimately victorious. By listening to the testimony about the fulfillment of Revelation's prophecies, meeting the one who overcomes, and receiving God's seal, believers can attain salvation, eternal life, and resurrection.

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42. The house of heaven's wedding banquet and its guests

[Ref.: Rv 19:7-9; Mt 22:1-14; Mt 25:1-13; Lk 14:16-24; Ez 39:17-20]

When and where will the house of the wedding banquet, which Jesus promised in the New Testament, appear? There are two places where wedding banquets take place in Revelation: one for a wedding in which the devil is the groom and another in which Jesus is the groom.

Today, in the time of the second coming, all believers are waiting for the wedding banquet of the Lamb to begin. Before it begins, however, all the events of Revelation through chapter 18 must be fulfilled. The prophecies tell us that the bride-like believers of Babylon take the evil spirit as their groom before the wedding of the Lamb occurs (Rv 18:23). The nation of Babylon, which is the the kingdom of demons that deceives all nations at the end of the age, must therefore be judged (Rv 18) before the wedding banquet of the Lamb can take place (Rv 19:7). This wedding brings the marriage of Satan to an end and unites God's people with the holy spirit of Jesus. This is also the unification of the souls of the martyrs in heaven with the wheat-like believers who are harvested from slavery in Babylon.

What, then, is the true identity of this nation of Babylon? When and where does it appear? Babylon is an organization that has already invaded the tabernacle of heaven, as was prophesied in Rv 13.

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Babylon fought and defeated the tabernacle's congregation members before marking the members' right hands or foreheads with the name of their invading denomination. In Rv 13, Babylon's people are figuratively described as a beast that comes out of the sea. Its seven heads and ten horns are pastors who belong to the dragon.

At the wedding hall of the Lamb, the guests are invited after God's oxen and fattened beasts are butchered (Mt 22:1-14, DARBY; Ez 39:17-20). God's oxen and fattened beasts become the evidence that proves to people that this place is the wedding banquet hall of the Lamb. God's oxen symbolize the pastors who used to work in God's tabernacle (Rv 13), but who were abandoned because of their betrayal (1 Cor 9:9-10). The fattened beasts refer to the invaders who destroyed the congregation members of the tabernacle of heaven (Rv 13); they are pastors like the Pharisees whom Jesus condemned as vipers (Mt 23:33). God's oxen and fattened beasts, who represent the betrayers and destroyers, act according to the prophecies of Rv 16-18 and are seized. Just as Jesus testified about the true identity of the Pharisees at the time of the first coming, the fact that these oxen and fattened beasts are captured means that people testify about them and reveal their true identities (Mt 23).

Luke 13:29 says, "People will come from east and west, and from north and south, and take their places at the banquet table in the kingdom of God." Matthew 8:12 says, "The sons of the kingdom will be thrown out into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Who are each of these groups of people? Those who are thrown into the outer darkness are the

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chosen people of Israel at the times of both the first and second comings. In the second coming, these chosen people are the people of the tabernacle of heaven who betrayed God (Rv 6, 13). Those who come from the east, west, north, and south to take their places at the banquet table come in a specific order. First, the wealthy are invited to this wedding banquet, but one after another they all make excuses to avoid attending. One claims to have bought a field he must go out and see. Another claims to have bought five yoke of oxen he must go examine. Still another refuses to come because he was just married (Lk 14:16-20).

The field in this parable represents a believer's heart (1 Cor 3:9). When the man claims to have bought a field he is referring to going to visit a person to whom he has just evangelized. Since oxen symbolize God's workers (1 Cor 9:9-10), the man who refuses to come to the wedding because he has to go examine his oxen is actually a pastor going out to educate his church workers. When Paul said, "For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy, because I promised you in marriage to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ," (2 Cor 11:2), he made it clear that a pastor is in the position of a groom and his congregation members are in the position of a bride. Therefore, the man who refuses because he was just married is referring to his spiritual marriage—the evangelism of believers.

After hearing their excuses, it is clear that these people who refuse their invitations are pastors and not lay people. Like the messenger of the church in Laodicea mentioned in Rv 3:14-17,

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they consider themselves to be wealthy and they are satisfied with their spiritual lives.

After these wealthy would-be guests refuse their invitations, the king's servants travel to the streets and alleys of the town to bring in the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind (Lk 14:13, 21). The poor in this parable represent people who lack the word, but who have thirsty hearts that yearn for the truth. The crippled are people whose spiritual lives have grown sick because of the word. The lame are people who are incapable of carrying out a proper life of faith, and the blind are people who cannot understand the Bible even after reading it.

Even after all the poor and the sick are gathered, because seats still remain, the king's servants work to fill the banquet hall by once more going out to the roads and country lanes to urge people to attend (Lk 14:22-23). The king holding the banquet represents God, but it is the king's son (Jesus) who is the main character at the wedding banquet hall. The people who refused to come even after being invited are not allowed to participate in the banquet (Lk 14:24). At the time of the first coming, although Jesus invited the subjects of the kingdom to follow him, they refused. This is why Jesus brought Physical Israel to an end and made it possible for anyone who believed in him to become one of God's children.

If this is the case, why are the chosen people thrown out of the wedding banquet? There are certain qualifications believers must meet if they want to participate in the wedding banquet of the Lamb. All believers must have the wedding clothes (Mt 22:11), the

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lamp, and the oil (Mt 25:1-13). The wedding clothes represent our righteous acts (Rv 19:8), the lamp represents the Bible (Ps 119:105; 2 Pt 1:19), and the oil represents the words of the testimony of the holy spirit (Rv 11:3-7). Anyone who fails to prepare these things is thrown outside the city into the darkness (Mt 22:11-13). This is why the Bible tells us that although many are invited to the wedding banquet, few are chosen (Mt 22:1-14).

According to the prophecies of the New Testament, the chosen people must betray God and be destroyed by the beast prior to the wedding banquet of Jesus in Rv 19. Only then can the beast be defeated by the blood of the Lamb and the word of testimony; only then can those who are harvested gather at Mt. Zion. Christians must believe that Jesus' promised return occurs according to this logic of betrayal, destruction, and salvation before they can receive that salvation by finding the place where Jesus' promises have been fulfilled.

Because all nations are deceived at the end of the age (Rv 18), believers should consider God's words of promise to be their only teacher and path to life instead of listening blindly to the words of their own pastors. Believers must realize that only those who immerse themselves in the word and allow themselves to be led by the word can have the faith that leads to salvation. This is why Jesus warned people to follow God's words of promise instead of the words of their own pastors (Mt 23:37-38). Anyone who remains in the field (his or her own church) instead of gathering at the wedding banquet hall becomes a weed that cannot receive salvation.

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Believers must take up the word as their true teacher. Just belonging to a church that claims to be orthodox is not enough. There is no salvation for those who refuse to participate in the wedding banquet of Jesus. Their faith is ultimately futile.

We at Shincheonji have captured God's oxen and fattened beasts. We have been inviting guests to the wedding banquet of the Lamb. Any Christians who truly believe in the recorded words of promise will be happy to participate.

43. The three types of Israel and their twelve tribes

[Ref.: Gn 49:28; Mt 10:1-4; Jn 1:10-13; Lk 22:28-30]

What is the relationship between Israel and the twelve tribes? What are the three types of Israel? What are the twelve tribes promised in the New Testament?

When God created the heavens and the earth, he said, "Let us make humankind in our image, after our likeness," (Gn 1:26). The word "us" in this verse refers both to God and to his angels that participated in the work of creation. Some of these angels betrayed God, and one of them, Satan, entered the serpent in the Garden of Eden to deceive Adam. After Adam sinned, God referred to this angel when he said, "Man has become like one of us," (Gn 3:22). Clearly, what has happened in the spiritual world occurs in the same way in the physical world.

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God fulfills his will on earth as he does in heaven. God showed Moses a pattern in the spiritual world and told him to build a tabernacle according to what he had seen (Ex 25:9). God also told him to place twelve loaves of consecrated bread in the tabernacle and light the tabernacle's seven lamps. Jesus, who came to the earth to fulfill God's will, also acted in the way he had seen God working (Jn 5:19).

In the end times for the Christian world, according to the prophecies of Rv 7, God creates the twelve tribes of New Spiritual Israel by placing his seal on his people (Lk 22:28-30). God creates New Spiritual Israel here in the physical world because New Jerusalem was first created in the spiritual world after Jesus ascended into heaven.

Let us learn about Israel and the twelve tribes. There are three types of Israel: Physical Israel, Spiritual Israel, and New Spiritual Israel.

The name Israel, which means *overcomer* in Hebrew, originated from Jacob's new name. Jacob received the name Israel after he wrestled with God's angel and overcame (Gn 32:28). Later, Jacob and his twelve sons became the forefathers of the twelve tribes of Israel (Gn 49:28).

Jesus, who was born of the tribe of Judah, became another Israel by overcoming the world (Jn 16:33). He judged and brought Physical Israel to an end because it had become corrupt. Jesus chose twelve disciples from the remnants of Physical Israel. Through these twelve

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men Jesus created the nation of Spiritual Israel—the Christian world (Mt 10:1-4; Jn 1:10-13).

Today, the pastor promised by Jesus fights and overcomes the Nicolaitans, who are the organization of Satan (Rv 2-3), and he judges Spiritual Israel. He gathers wheat-like believers from among the remnants of Spiritual Israel, and through these believers he creates the twelve tribes of New Spiritual Israel (Rv 7). In every generation of Israel it is the one who overcomes who creates the twelve tribes. These overcomers are Jacob, Jesus, and the pastor promised by Jesus.

New Spiritual Israel is created after Spiritual Israel is judged and comes to an end. The end of Spiritual Israel is prophesied figuratively when Rv 6 says that the sun and the moon in heaven become dark and the stars fall to the earth. Then, the 144,000 people (12,000 from each tribe) are chosen as firstfruits, and they become the priests of God's kingdom of New Spiritual Israel. These people have mastered the Bible because they are sealed with the new covenant and the words that testify about its physical fulfillment. This is the first time since the creation of the world that this has happened. After the 144,000 people are harvested, the great multitude dressed in white robes streams to Mt. Zion and becomes the people of New Spiritual Israel.

The three types of Israel mentioned above have similarities. They are all created by the one who overcomes, they all are made up of twelve tribes, and they all have a serpent-like group existing

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among them. Since the fact that each Israel is created only when the one who overcomes appears, no further explanation is necessary.

Jacob's twelve sons became the twelve tribes of Physical Israel, and Jesus chose twelve disciples to create the twelve tribes during the first coming. At the second coming, the promised pastor, the one who overcomes, chooses wheat-like believers from among Spiritual Israel, and through them, he creates the twelve tribes of New Spiritual Israel.

To be a part of the twelve tribes of New Spiritual Israel, which are promised in the Bible, people must be harvested from the churches (in the north, south, east, and west), receive God's seal, and have their names written in the book of life. People who fail to meet these conditions become gentiles instead of the people of heaven. Only Christians who are born again of God's seed can become true believers. The positions and authority that Christian people have attained in their own churches mean nothing. All the churches of the world have been built and named according to the will of men; they have nothing to do with God's will.

Next, let us learn about the serpent-like entity that exists among each of these types of Israel. Dan was the serpent among the twelve tribes of Physical Israel (Gn 49:17), and Judas Iscariot was the serpent among the twelve disciples of Spiritual Israel. Similarly, one of the twelve tribes of New Spiritual Israel in Rv 7 also becomes a serpent. This happens in every generation in the physical world because it first took place in the spiritual world (Gn 3:22).

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In Rv 21:1-3, the spiritual kingdom of God, the holy city New Jerusalem, descends to the physical world onto the new heaven and new earth (New Spiritual Israel). This is how New Spiritual Israel becomes the holy city on earth that will never disappear. Even when Satan is released after the millennium to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth (Gog and Magog), and even when he and his followers are finally judged, this holy city of God remains. The holy city will exist forever because those who dwell within this city have united with Jesus and with the spirits of the martyrs.

God's will is to create the twelve tribes that he promised in the New Testament. Jesus and his disciples, who died as martyrs, descend upon the 144,000 people of the twelve tribes that are created on earth today and resurrect using their bodies. The body and spirit become one; spirit and flesh are united in one body[9]. The holy spirit descends upon people who are born of the seed of the word, and heaven is established. I hope that all believers can become the people of the kingdom of heaven by joining the twelve tribes that have been created today.

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9 – The Korean phrase *shin in hap il chae* (신인합일체 or 神人合一體) literally means *god and man together in one body.* The Chinese character 神 (신 or *shin*) means *god, divine being, or spirit.*

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44. A full understanding of the first resurrection

[Ref.: Rv 20:4-6; 1 Cor 15; Mt 22:23-32; Rom 8:9-11]

To what kind of resurrection does the above title refer? The word resurrection is commonly used when referring to a resurgent business or a renovated building. As it appears in this essay, however, resurrection refers to both the spiritual and physical resurrection of people.

At the time of the first coming, many Jewish rabbis went to Jesus with questions about the Bible. They were bound by the Old Testament law with a very literal understanding of the Bible. Because their level of biblical knowledge was as low as if they were little children, they were completely incapable of understanding Jesus, who had received and was proclaiming the revelation from heaven.

Spiritual matters can only be understood with the ears of the holy spirit. There are two types of resurrection: spiritual and physical. A person whose body is still alive can be resurrected (spiritual resurrection), but so can the dead (physical resurrection). Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live even if he dies, and the one who lives and believes in me will never die," (Jn 11:25-26). After saying this, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.

Jesus said that he would raise up at the last day those who eat his flesh and drink his blood (Jn 6:51-54). The dead, however, cannot be

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raised with the same bodies they had while living. This is because blood and flesh that has already decayed and disappeared cannot inherit God's kingdom (1 Cor 15:50). According to 1 Cor 15:51-54, the spirits of those whose physical bodies have died will be raised with spiritual bodies at the last day. At that time, the bodies of those of us who are alive will be made imperishable. Death will be swallowed up in life (victory) through this transformation of flesh and spirit.

❖ [51]Listen, I will tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed – [52]in a moment, in the blinking of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. [53]For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. [54]Now when this perishable puts on the imperishable, and this mortal puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will happen, "Death has been swallowed up in victory." (1 Cor 15:51-54)

This last day, when the resurrection takes place, arrives after the sounding of the seventh and final trumpet as recorded in Rv 11:15. The era of Christianity (the first heaven) comes to an end, and the era of the millennium (the new heaven) begins (Rv 20:4-6). According to Paul, just as there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body. He also said that although dead bodies that have already decayed cannot be raised again, the spirits that used to inhabit those physical bodies can be raised with spiritual bodies (1 Cor 15:42-45).

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✥ [42]It is the same with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. [43]It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; [44]it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. [45]So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living person"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. [46]However, the spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and then the spiritual. [47]The first man is from the earth, made of dust; the second man is from heaven. [48]Like the one made of dust, so too are those made of dust, and like the one from heaven, so too those who are heavenly. [49]And just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, let us also bear the image of the man of heaven. [50]Now this is what I am saying, brothers and sisters: Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. (1 Cor 15:42-50)

At the time of his first coming, the Sadducees slyly asked Jesus about the resurrection of the dead by referring to a woman who consecutively married each of seven brothers because they kept dying shortly after marriage. The Sadducees wanted to know whose wife this woman would be at the resurrection (Mt 22:23-28). Jesus replied that at the resurrection, people will neither marry nor be given in marriage because they will be like the angels (Mt 22:29-30). When a person whose physical body had died resurrects, it is a resurrection of their spirit. It has nothing to do with the flesh.

When speaking with a man who claimed he would follow Jesus after going to bury his father, Jesus said, "Let the dead bury their

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own dead, but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God," (Lk 9:59-60). In this verse, the dead who bury their own dead are people with dead spirits but living bodies. The dead people being buried are people whose bodies have also died.

Elsewhere, Jesus said, "A time is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and will come out—the ones who have done what is good to the resurrection resulting in life, and the ones who have done what is evil to the resurrection resulting in condemnation," (Jn 5:24-29). The tombs in this passage represent Jerusalem, which became a spiritual tomb at that time (Mt 23).

✥ [24]"I tell you the solemn truth, the one who hears my message and believes the one who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned, but has crossed over from death to life. [25]I tell you the solemn truth, a time is coming – and is now here – when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. [26]For just as the Father has life in himself, thus he has granted the Son to have life in himself, [27]and he has granted the Son authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. [28]"Do not be amazed at this, because a time is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice [29]and will come out – the ones who have done what is good to the resurrection resulting in life, and the ones who have done what is evil to the resurrection resulting in condemnation. (Jn 5:24-29)

Jesus called the believers in Jerusalem dead people in their tombs because their spirits had been killed by the false teachings of the serpent-like Pharisees and teachers of the law (i.e., by the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil). Jesus called the

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Pharisees and teachers of the law "whitewashed tombs" (Mt 23:27) and "unmarked graves" (Lk 11:44). When Jesus said that those who hear his voice will resurrect he meant that people's dead spirits can live once more. This is exactly like what happened when Adam became a living spirit or being when God gave him the breath of life (Gn 2:7).

As discussed above, some people have living flesh and living spirits, while others have dead flesh and dead spirits. There are also people with living flesh and dead spirits, and others with dead flesh and living spirits.

In Revelation, the beast and the false prophets are seized and thrown into the fiery lake of burning sulfur (Rv 19:20). The dragon (Satan), which deceived all nations, is captured and locked up in the abyss. After these events, the first resurrection takes place such that the physically dead, but spiritually living souls of the martyrs, along with those who are both spiritually and physically alive at the time, reign together with Christ for 1,000 years (Rv 20:1-6). Paul discusses this in 1 Cor 15 where he says that these physically dead but spiritually living souls of the martyrs will put on spiritual bodies, and the physical bodies of those who are both spiritually and physically alive will be transformed. The spirit and flesh unite and resurrect. This is why Jesus said, "You will know at that time that I am in my Father and you are in me and I am in you," (Jn 14:20). Just as Jesus said, the spirits of the martyrs will enter the hearts of those who have been transformed and unite with them. Revelation 21:1-3 also refers to this event when it says that

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the holy city New Jerusalem in the spiritual realm descends upon and unites with the new heaven and new earth.

✥ [1]Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and earth had ceased to exist, and the sea existed no more. [2]And I saw the holy city – the new Jerusalem – descending out of heaven from God, made ready like a bride adorned for her husband. [3]And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying: "Look! The residence of God is among human beings. He will live among them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them. [4]He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death will not exist any more – or mourning, or crying, or pain, for the former things have ceased to exist." [5]And the one seated on the throne said: "Look! I am making all things new!" Then he said to me, "Write it down, because these words are reliable and true." [6]He also said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the one who is thirsty I will give water free of charge from the spring of the water of life. (Rv 21:1-6)

In addition to the above passage, there are several other scriptures that mention the unification of spirits and flesh. Hosea 2:19, for example, talks about God dwelling within Jesus, promising that God would marry and live together with the coming Messiah. The wedding banquet of the Lamb in Rv 19 and the wedding banquet of heaven in Mt 25 also refer to the unification of spirits and flesh. Paul, too, speaks of the resurrection in Romans, "Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, this person does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, but

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the Spirit is your life because of righteousness. Moreover if the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you, the one who raised Christ from the dead will also make your mortal bodies alive through his Spirit who lives in you," (Rom 8:9-11).

When the resurrection Jesus promised takes place, the dead and those who are alive will both live as transformed beings. This resurrection is our objective in having faith in Jesus. We believe our spirits will live even if our bodies die, and that we will be transformed and live eternally if the resurrection takes place while we are still physically alive (Jn 11:25-27). Our objective is resurrection and eternal life. When the 144,000 people of Mt. Zion's twelve tribes (Rv 7:2-8, 14:1-5) have overcome the beast, his image, and the number of his name (Rv 15:2, 20:4) by being sealed, they will participate in the first resurrection with the souls of the martyrs and reign as kings with Christ for 1,000 years (Rv 20:5-6). I pray that everyone would understand this concept and participate in the first resurrection (i.e., the unification of spirits and flesh), which Jesus promised. Jesus died to accomplish this work, and now he has become a spirit to work within us (Jn 14:20; Rv 3:20).

45. The time of the city of the millennium

[Ref.: Rv 20; 2 Pt 3:8-13; Rv 19:19-21]

What is the time of the city of the millennium? When and where is it fulfilled? The time of the city of the millennium begins after

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the first heaven (i.e., Spiritual Israel) comes to an end. Those who are harvested from the first heaven become the nation of New Spiritual Israel. This is when the world of the second heaven begins.

People need ears that can hear to believe the passages regarding the city of the millennium. This is why Jesus said seven times in Rv 2-3, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

At the end times for the world of Christianity, the fulfillment of the prophecies in Revelation begins (Rv 1:9-20) when the seven spirits in front of God's throne (Rv 4:5) descend on seven messengers. The events that follow occur according to the old Korean proverb, "Whenever good things happen, evil always lurks nearby to interfere." Satan's group, the Nicolaitans, invades the tabernacle of the seven messengers to carry out Satan's work (Rv 2:14-15). The two groups go to war, but the Nicolaitans defeat Jesus' seven messengers and seize control over the tabernacle (Rv 13:6-7). There is one person (the promised pastor) in that tabernacle, however, who is able to overcome the Nicolaitans. Revelation 12, which teaches us about this event, describes a woman clothed with the sun, moon, and stars who gives birth to a child (a son) who will rule all nations. This child and his brothers, along with the angels in heaven, overcome the dragon and its group. As a result, the beast and the false prophet are thrown into the fiery lake of burning sulfur (Rv 19:20) and the dragon is locked up in the abyss for 1,000 years (Rv 20:1-3).

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The following verses describe the activities of the beast and the false prophet and how they are captured:

- [1]Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea. It had ten horns and seven heads, and on its horns were ten diadem crowns, and on its heads a blasphemous name. [2]Now the beast that I saw was like a leopard, but its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. The dragon gave the beast his power, his throne, and great authority to rule ... [6]So the beast opened his mouth to blaspheme against God – to blaspheme both his name and his dwelling place, that is, those who dwell in heaven. [7]The beast was permitted to go to war against the saints and conquer them. He was given ruling authority over every tribe, people, language, and nation, [8]and all those who live on the earth will worship the beast, everyone whose name has not been written since the foundation of the world in the book of life belonging to the Lamb who was killed.... [16]He also caused everyone (small and great, rich and poor, free and slave) to obtain a mark on their right hand or on their forehead. [17]Thus no one was allowed to buy or sell things unless he bore the mark of the beast – that is, his name or his number. (Rv 13:1-2, 6-8, 16-17)

- [1]Then I saw an angel descending from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the abyss and a huge chain. [2]He seized the dragon – the ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan – and tied him up for a thousand years. [3]The angel then threw him into the abyss and locked and sealed it so that he could not deceive the nations until the one

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thousand years were finished. (After these things he must be released for a brief period of time.) (Rv 20:1-3)

The beast and the false prophet are the physical bodies that work on behalf of the dragon to destroy God's tabernacle. The dragon, which is the spirit of Satan, uses their flesh to carry out his work. The era of the city of the millennium begins (Rv 20:4-6, NASB) after this spirit and these flesh are locked up (Rv 20:1-3, 19:19-20).

Who will live in the city of the millennium? What will it be like to live in a world without any evil spirits, beasts, or false prophets?

Because Satan has deceived all nations (Christians) (Rv 18:3, 23), now is the time of Jesus' second coming. By overcoming with the blood of the Lamb (Jesus) and with their testimony (Rv 12:7-11), the spirit of Jesus, the child born of the woman (Rv 12:1-5), and the child's brothers drive the dragon and his group back to the earth. These overcomers refuse to worship the beast in Rv 13 or to receive his mark. Because they overcome the beast, his idol (false prophet), and the number of his name (Rv 15:2), they are sealed with God's name as the firstfruits—the 144,000 of the twelve tribes (Rv 14:1-5). The spiritual heaven, which is the holy temple, will descend upon the tabernacle in which they dwell (Rv 21:1-2). Then, the spirits of the martyrs will unite with the tabernacle's people (Rv 20:4-6, NASB; 1 Cor 15:51-54). After this first resurrection, these people will rule with Christ for 1,000 years (Rv 20:4-6, NASB). This is the city of the millennium, and this is why the Bible says that those who partake in the first resurrection are blessed and holy.

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- [4]Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. [5]The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. [6]Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years. (Rv 20:4-6, NASB)

- [51]Listen, I will tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed – [52]in a moment, in the blinking of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. [53]For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. [54]Now when this perishable puts on the imperishable, and this mortal puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will happen, "Death has been swallowed up in victory." (1 Cor 15:51-54)

After being locked up for 1,000 years, Satan will emerge from the abyss to deceive Gog and Magog and wage war against the city God loves. At that time, however, fire will come down from heaven to devour them. Satan will again be captured and thrown into the burning lake of sulfur. Gog and Magog are the people from the four corners of the earth (Rv 20:8) that live outside the city of the

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millennium. The people who live inside the city of the millennium are those who did not receive the mark of the beast in Rv 13 and who participated in the first resurrection (Rv 20:4-5, NASB). They are the firstfruits and the twelve tribes of New Spiritual Israel that have learned the new song.

In Rv 20, after those seated on the thrones (Rv 20:4, NASB) judge Satan, Gog, and Magog (Rv 20:7-10), those who died are judged by God's and Jesus' words according to their actions as they are recorded in the books (Jn 12:48; Rv 20:12). Those who sit on thrones with the authority to judge are Jesus' disciples in spirit and in flesh (Mt 19:28; Rv 20:4, NASB).

- Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth: In the age when all things are renewed, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Mt 19:28)

The sea, death, and Hades all give up their dead so that they can be judged according to their actions. Then death and Hades too are thrown into the lake of fire (Rv 20:12-15). In his vision of future events, John saw the city of the millennium (Rv 20:4-6, NASB) in which those who take part in the first resurrection live. He also saw the events that will take place outside the city after the 1,000 years are over (Rv 20:7-15). Those outside the city are devoured by fire from heaven (Rv 20:7-10), and the dead are judged in front of the white throne (Rv 20:12-13). The earth and sky flee from the presence of the one who sits on the throne (Rv 20:11).

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After this final judgment, a new world begins—one with no more evil spirits or evil people. Only those that took part in the first resurrection and who live in the city of the millennium will remain. Therefore, everyone living at the time of Revelation's fulfillment must repent within 1,000 years; everyone must make every effort to enter the holy city of the millennium. All who fail to enter the city of the millennium will be judged by fire and will go to hell.

It is important to note that Rv 21 and 22 are an explanation and summary of all the events of Revelation up through chapter 20. The evil ones described in Rv 21:8 and Rv 22:15 are already judged and brought to an end in Rv 20. The tree of life that bears twelve crops of fruit every month in Rv 22 also exists throughout the millennium. The messenger of Jesus mentioned in Rv 22:16-17 testifies about all the events of Revelation beginning with chapter one. The new heaven and new earth mentioned in Rv 21 were previously mentioned in Rv 7 and 14. Revelation 21:1-4 records how the holy city New Jerusalem descends from heaven, and how God's tabernacle will finally unite as one with mankind. When Rv 21 mentions that God's dwelling will be with men, it refers to the same time and content mentioned in Rv 14. In Rv 14, God's spiritual world descends on those on the earth that have participated in the first resurrection—the 144,000 people of the twelve tribes. Revelation 7 details the process by which the 144,000 are sealed, and afterwards, how the great multitude dressed in white robes also comes. God, who sits on the throne, spreads his tabernacle over them and dwells with them. The Lamb at the center of the

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throne acts as their shepherd, and he leads them to springs of living water. God will wipe every tear away from their eyes.

Prophecies are given before they are actually fulfilled so that people can believe when the fulfillment occurs (Jn 14:29). Just believing in the prophecies without believing in their physical fulfillment is futile. Just having sufficient knowledge to master the Bible means nothing without believing in the physical fulfillment of the promises recorded in the Bible. That knowledge becomes useless baggage that cannot deliver anyone to salvation. I pray that all believers will fulfill their hopes of eternal life and heaven through the faith that has been revealed (2 Pt 3:8-13).

46. The holy spirit and religion

[Ref.: Jn 6:45, 14:6; 1 Cor 2:10; Acts 2:1-4, 1:5-8]

What do the words holy spirit and religion mean? Religion cannot be discussed without talking about God, because God is the origin of religion. The Korean word for religion literally translates as *highest teaching*. In other words, religion is concerned with the things of heaven, not the things of earth. Religion's objective is the knowledge of God, who is a holy spirit from heaven (Jn 6:45). Just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so God's knowledge is higher and greater than the knowledge of men. God's knowledge is the root of all knowledge (Is 55:8-9).

True religion, therefore, is seeing our Father in heaven (Rv 22:3-5), learning from him, and practicing filial piety toward him (Jn 6:45).

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We demonstrate our devotion to God through reverence for our heavenly Father, through sacrifice, and through worship. The first syllable in the Korean word for devotion (효 or *hyo*) refers to a type of education that is considered higher than all other types. Religious people call God in heaven "Father" because God established and fathered religion; he rears his followers as his children. God is also Father of all creation, because he created everything in heaven and on earth (Gn 1:1).

Religious people should not serve anything (e.g., another god or part of the creation) other than God—the holy spirit that created us. Created beings that forsake the God that fathered them to serve another become betrayers.

After living a certain life of faith for awhile, some people decide to change religions. Proselytizing is the act of winning converts to one's own religion, and a converted person is known as a proselyte. A Buddhist who moves from one branch of Buddhism to another has not been proselytized; both branches are under Buddhism. If that same Buddhist were to choose Christianity, however, he or she has been proselytized. Similarly, a person from the Church of Jesus who moves to a different denomination within the Church of Jesus has not been proselytized; both denominations are within the Church of Jesus. It is incorrect to claim that someone from the Church of Jesus has been converted to the Church of Jesus. Anyone who claims that this person is a proselyte is deceiving people by using the word incorrectly. They are carrying out acts of lawlessness. Christians are people who believe in God, in Jesus,

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in the word, and in the fact that people can only be forgiven and saved through the astounding work of the cross. It is wrong to persecute fellow Christians as cults because their doctrines are different, and it is wrong to force them to attend a different church while claiming they have been proselytized.

What kind of place is a mental institute from a religious standpoint? Mental institutes are known for having imprisoned people possessed by various kinds of evil spirits (i.e., by Satan and his demons), not by the spirit of God. Today, some pastors take fellow Christians and confine them to mental institutes just because they refused to switch churches. These pastors must be messengers of the devil, not the messengers of God they claim to be. Just as we can recognize a tree by its fruit, we can recognize a person by his or her deeds (Mt 7:15-20).

God left humanity because of its sins, but Jesus took our sins upon himself so that people could be reunited with God. Afterward, God's holy spirit descended upon people when their sins had disappeared. Before Jesus bore the cross, the holy spirit could not descend on anyone because of the sin within them. Jesus said, "For John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now," (Acts 1:5). He also said, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses ... to the farthest parts of the earth," (Acts 1:8).

Jesus said these things before the holy spirit came. After Jesus spoke those words, however, the holy spirits descended on people

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on the day of Pentecost in Mark's upper room and they were able to speak in the tongues of every nation (Acts 2:1-4). By doing so, the apostles were able to spread the gospel to the ends of the earth. They could not speak in all these tongues by their own abilities, they spoke them by the power of the holy spirit. This occurred according to what is written in 1 Cor 2:10, "For the Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God." This is true religion—the highest teaching. This is the work of God. Just as the heavens are higher than the earth, the level of God is higher than the level of men.

Even with an abundance of secular knowledge, even after graduating from a theological seminary, no one who lacks the holy spirit can be a follower of true religion. Jesus' disciples sowed the seed of the gospel of heaven to the ends of the earth through the power of the holy spirit. The time of the Lord's second coming, however, will be different. Prophecies come to an end and tongues will cease. At that time we will see face to face (1 Cor 13:12) because it will be the time of physical fulfillment.

Today, we live our spiritual lives in Shincheonji Church of Jesus. Shincheonji means *new heaven and new earth* (Rv 21:1). It is called the "Church of Jesus" because Jesus is the founder of the new heaven and new earth. What is the difference between Shincheonji Church of Jesus and the ordinary churches of Jesus in Korea? Calling each church in Korea a "church of Jesus" implies that Jesus is its leader. When we say "Shincheonji Church of Jesus" it reflects the fact that Jesus is the leader of heaven and earth. The Korean Church of

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Jesus limits its boundaries to the nation of Korea, but Shincheonji Church of Jesus is as large as the heavens and the earth. Shincheonji Church of Jesus is the promised church that appears at the promised time, that is, it appears at the time of Revelation's fulfillment.

When Jesus, who is light and day, left this world, everything was plunged into a deep, dark night (Jn 9:4-5). Just as night arrives when the sun sets in the west, this world turned to night when Jesus left it. Today, this world has been in constant darkness for the past 2,000 years. In nature, the light and day reappear when the sun rises again in the east. When Jesus comes again like the sun rising in the east, light and day will reappear. Since Shincheonji Church of Jesus has become the light for this dark world, the people in darkness see it and are gathering around. This is actually happening. With our great light, we are shining into the dark to make a world that is as bright as the day.

God's word is the lamp that lights our way (Ps 119:105). God's word itself is also a light (Jn 1:4). Without truth, this world is like a roadless desert. The many doctrines of the world are all intertwined like an entangling field of wormwood. Just as Jesus became the light, the way, and the water of life in his time (Jn 14:6), today, Shincheonji has become the light for those who are in darkness, the way for those who are lost, and the water for those who are thirsty. When a clear, well-paved path appears, people will come to walk upon it; when light is found in the midst of the darkness, people will see it and gather around. This is why people are flocking to Shincheonji. Their thirsty souls have found an oasis in the rugged

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desert. The Bible makes it clear that, in addition to the believers of this current age, all those who have died in the Lord since the time of Adam also come to Shincheonji (Rv 6:9-11).

From darkness to light, from a place without any recognizable path to a good, well-paved road, from arid places to a place where the spring water flows freely—people are gathering like clouds. I say truly, let thanks be given to God.

Shincheonji Church of Jesus—The Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony (Rv 15:2-5)—is the place all nations will come and worship because it is where God, Jesus, those who overcome, and all God's angels are gathered. This is the place of our hope; it is our ultimate destination.

47. The apostles of God and the pastors of men

[Ref.: Jn 7:14-18; Jn 6:45; Gal 1:11-12; Lk 11:47- 49; Acts 1:5-8; 1 Cor 2:10]

In the time of the Old Testament, God made his will known through his chosen prophets (Hos 12:10). In the time of the New Testament, however, God's son Jesus, and subsequently his disciples, were the conduits by which the will of heaven was made known (Lk 6:12-13).

In the time of the Old Testament, there were priests appointed by men and prophets appointed by God. This continued in the time of Jesus, with priests appointed by men and apostles appointed

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directly by Jesus. In both the time of the Old Testament and at the time of Jesus' first coming, the priests appointed by men persecuted the apostles appointed by God and Jesus by calling them a cult and even killing them (Lk 11:47-49). Judging from their actions, which ones are true pastors?

Over the past 6,000 years of God's history, the 66 books of the Bible have come to be recognized as the sacred canon. The 39 books of the Old Testament were canonized by A.D. 90, and the 27 books of the New Testament were canonized in A.D. 397.

The current concept of a theological seminary began around the second century in Alexandria with the first school known to teach Christian doctrines. This school of doctrines lectured about the gospel during lectures about philosophy. Soon, many more theological seminaries were established, and by the Middle Ages, as the large universities of Europe were being founded, many included departments of theology. Christianity came to our country [Korea] approximately 120 years ago, but it has only been 55 years since the Ministry of Education acknowledged the establishment of the first Protestant theological seminary.

These past 55 years seem to be an incredibly short period of time when compared to the 6,000 years of biblical history that have passed since God's act of creation. To this day, the gospel of God has been handed down via word of mouth with the guidance of the holy spirit (Acts 1:5-8, 2:1- 4). The very early days of Christianity were especially amazing because the gospel was spread mostly via the small-scale activities of churches that gathered in people's homes.

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Today, only those who study and graduate from a four-year theological seminary can officially be ordained in Korea. Again, you must study theology and be ordained to preach and call yourself a pastor. This is considered a doctrine of orthodox Christianity that has been handed down over generations. Consequently, a person who has not been ordained as a pastor by men, but who preaches from a pulpit after receiving the holy spirit is treated as a false pastor. This pastor's church is treated as a false church. Which path, however, represents the true will of God—preaching after receiving the holy spirit or preaching without the holy spirit after being ordained? Can a pastor be acknowledged by God just by being ordained at a theological seminary? What if the things he learned are not the real truth? If all people who preach without being ordained are considered false pastors, then Jesus, his disciples, and the Old Testament prophets must also be considered false pastors because they did not study theology nor were they ordained (Jn 7:14-18). If Jesus, his disciples, and the Old Testament prophets are considered false, then the gospel they proclaimed (i.e., the Bible) must also be false. If so, then it is inconsistent for legitimately ordained pastors to use and believe in that Bible.

John quoted Is 54:13 in his gospel when he wrote, "It is written in the prophets, 'And they will all be taught by God.' Everyone who hears and learns from the Father comes to me," (Jn 6:45). In Rv 14, the 144,000 firstfruits from the twelve tribes learn the new song in front of God's throne in Zion. Both Rv 14 and Jn 6 tell us that the word of God should be taught by the holy spirit. Therefore,

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according to the Bible, the pastors who have graduated from theological seminaries established by people without the holy spirit are the ones who should be considered false pastors.

There is no verse in the Bible that says pastors must graduate from a four-year theological seminary and be ordained to call themselves pastors. In fact, according to Rv 13, when the beast (Satan) enters the tabernacle of heaven it places a mark on the foreheads of God's servants and only those who receive the mark are allowed to buy or sell, which refers to preaching the word. This is figurative language that means only those who are ordained according to the doctrines of that specific denomination are allowed to preach. Even after graduating from a theological seminary and being ordained, no one is qualified to become a pastor without receiving the holy spirit. It is quite possible for a person who has never attended seminary or been ordained to have received the holy spirit and, thus, be fully qualified to become a pastor. People can only receive the holy spirit by faith. Even if a pastor is ordained a thousand or ten thousand times, he can still never become a true pastor of God without receiving the holy spirit. Those who receive the holy spirit know the deep things of God, which are the secrets of the kingdom of heaven (1 Cor 2:10). If a person does not know the meaning of the words promised in the Bible, then it is clear that he or she has not received the holy spirit. It is clear that he or she must be preaching only the teachings of men (Mt 15:1-9). The Bible is the only way to judge whether a person has received the holy spirit, and thus, whether he or she is qualified to become a pastor.

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Jesus bore the cross so that the holy spirit could descend upon people (Jn 7:38-39). This is why after receiving the holy spirit, Jesus' disciples could become his witnesses to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:5-8). Because the holy spirit understands the deepest things of heaven, it is able to act according to God's will. Shincheonji does not study the theology of the world. We lecture with the free gift of the water of life, with faith, and with the holy spirit that was given to us as a guarantee from God. This is why we refer to our Bible instructors as lecturers instead of as pastors. Although we have not been ordained by the world as pastors, we preach the word of revelation that has come down from heaven just like Apostle Paul (Gal 1:11-12). We believe this is the will of God.

The canon and the Apocrypha

In their day, the theologians of Alexandria settled on an Old Testament canon consisting of 39 books written in Hebrew and roughly 15 books written mostly in Greek. By A.D. 90, however, the Council of Jamnia concluded that these extra books should not be included in the biblical canon, and today, we call these books the Apocrypha.

Why are the current 39 books of the Old Testament, originally written in Hebrew, the only ones that are approved as being part of the biblical canon?

In the New Testament, Jesus and his disciples made hundreds of both direct and indirect quotes of the books of the Old Testament. Out of all these quotations, however, Jesus and his disciples never quoted or even mentioned any of the books we now know as the

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Apocrypha. Jesus also excluded the Apocrypha while making clear the other parts of the Old Testament he considered to be part of the canon (Mt 23:35; Lk 11:51).

Thus, the traditional canon must be considered the standard when discussing the word of God. The Apocrypha, as well as biblical commentaries, which represent man's understanding of the Bible, should not be considered truth like the canonical scriptures.

Distinguishing those who belong to God from those who belong to Satan

James 4:4 says, "Friendship with the world means hostility toward God." The Bible also says, "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him," (1 Jn 2:15). According to Jesus, the world hates us because we do not belong to it (Jn 15:19-23). Those who have left the twelve tribes of Shincheonji have created sects among us. They left their positions of authority and their homes. They have opposed us claiming that Shincheonji fears them because they have united with the pastors who work for the conversion education program. They have united with the world, and this action has revealed to whom they belong. All believers should use the Bible to distinguish their true identity.

Jesus Christ and Calvinism

Christians should recognize and acknowledge even the negative aspects of Christian history and how these aspects continue even to this day.

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One of the main doctrines of Calvinism concerns judging what is orthodox from what is heresy. Calvinists misuse the names of God and Jesus to seize more and more authority within Christianity. They use this ill-gotten authority to convert people's religion and further increase their influence. This has been sarcastically referred to as "church member hunting" (Ez 13:19-21). Anyone who refuses to change denominations is called a cult member—effectively giving them a spiritual death sentence. This type of torture occurred often in the history of Calvinism, and now it is clear that it has been passed down to people who act in the same way today.

We at Shincheonji Church of Jesus do not acknowledge as orthodox the methods or doctrines of Calvinism that seek to convert others by force and seize ecclesiastical authority by unsavory means. They claim to be orthodox and to have the authority to judge others. Through forgiveness and love, we at Shincheonji believe and keep the new covenant by believing and keeping the revelation of God and Jesus Christ. Believers must judge for themselves whether they are true Christians according to the Bible. It is not right to proclaim oneself to be orthodox based only on the ecclesiastical authority passed down through the doctrines of Calvinism.

Calvinism also insists on predestination, but Shincheonji does not acknowledge predestination as truth. Calvinist churches rarely, if ever, mention the New Testament book of Revelation, but Jesus said that nothing should ever be added to or taken away from the scriptures (Rv 22:18-19). Should Christians follow Jesus or John

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Calvin? We must base our decisions on the Bible and our faith in it (Dt 30:19-20).

48. Christ came in God's name

[Ref.: Is 54:13; Jn 6:45, 10:30; Jn 14, 19:30; Rv 21:6-7]

According to John, Jesus quoted the prophet Isaiah when he said, "And they will all be taught by God," (Jn 6:45; Is 54:13). Because God was in Jesus, and because the words spoken by Jesus were the words of God (Jn 14:24), learning from Jesus was learning from God. Furthermore, since God is spirit, being taught by a person who has received the spirit is to listen and learn from God.

- It is written in the Prophets: "They will all be taught by God." Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me. (Jn 6:45)

- All your sons will be taught by the LORD, and great will be your children's peace. (Is 54:13)

John the Baptist came in the name of Elijah (Lk 1:17; Mt 11:10-14), Jesus came in the name of the Father (Jn 5:43), and the holy spirit of the advocate comes in the name of Jesus (Jn 14:26, 16:13-15). The pastor who receives the holy spirit of the advocate comes in the name of the advocate to teach God's people. When spirits enter people the two unite as one, but in the spiritual world spirits exist independently of one another. When Jesus said, "I and the Father are one," in Jn 10:30, he was referring to the fact that the spirit of God was in his physical body (Jn 14:10).

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After Jesus ascended to heaven, however, God and Jesus were separated as two beings in the spiritual world. We know this by looking at the testimony of Stephen in Acts 7:54-60. As he was being stoned, Stephen testified that he saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God.

God fulfilled his prophecies from the Old Testament through Jesus (Jn 19:30). In the New Testament, Jesus also made many prophecies. Through whom does Jesus fulfill these prophecies? The prophecies will be fulfilled through the one who overcomes (Rv 2-3, 12, 15, 21:6-7) promised by Jesus.

The holy spirit of the advocate comes from the spiritual world in the name of Jesus. The holy spirit of the advocate comes to and is received by the promised pastor (i.e., the one who overcomes). This means that the promised pastor comes and teaches in the name of the advocate. In the time of the Old Testament, Moses revealed God's will to the Israelites in the name of Jehovah God, who is self-existent (Ex 3:14). Similarly, when Jesus spoke on behalf of the holy spirit, his words were not his own. Because the holy spirit of God was dwelling within him, Jesus spoke the words of that spirit (Jn 14:24). Similarly, the holy spirit of the advocate dwells within and speaks through the one who overcomes (Jn 14:16-17). It should now be clear that spirits work (i.e., testify) through the flesh in which they dwell. Therefore, the words of the one who overcomes are the words of the holy spirit within him; listening to the words of the one who overcomes is listening to the words of and being taught by the holy spirit within him.

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Religion cannot exist without God. Without the spirit of God religion is nothing but a collection of the teachings of men. The one who receives the holy spirit, however, speaks the words of the holy spirit, which are the words of God.

The one who overcomes, who has received the holy spirit of truth, is with Shincheonji. The members of Shincheonji continually receive the teachings of the holy spirit from him. This is the same spirit that searches all things, even the deep things of God (1 Cor 2:10). Today is the time when the holy spirit descends upon Shincheonji to do its work. Christians who know the prophecies in the Bible will believe this.

49. Distinguishing Shincheonji Church of Jesus from the rest of the world's churches

[Ref.: Rv 21; Jn 14:29]

What is the difference between the Christian churches of the world and Shincheonji Church of Jesus, which is also Christian? When a church calls itself Christian, it proclaims Jesus as its leader. The churches of the world name themselves in many ways: according to denomination, tradition, region, etc. When they do so, however, they limit their reach. Shincheonji means *new heaven and new earth*. Hence, the name Shincheonji Church of Jesus refers to all of Christianity, including heaven and earth, the living and the

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dead. Therefore, no other church name can even compare to the name Shincheonji Church of Jesus.

God promised a new heaven and new earth in Rv 21 and the fulfillment of that prophecy was the creation of Shincheonji. The earth contains physical bodies and heaven is full of spirits. Shincheonji includes everything: heaven and earth, spirit and flesh.

Jesus came to earth and sowed the seed of the gospel for three years. Even though Physical Israel was just one nation, the seed of the gospel sown by Jesus was sown all around the world because Jesus commanded his disciples to be his witnesses to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). Christianity as a religion has now spread all over the globe. After Jesus returned to the Father, he even went to preach the gospel to the spirits of those who had died since the time of Adam (1 Pt 3:18-19). Through the twelve disciples, the spirits of the martyrs, and through Jesus preaching the gospel in the spiritual world, Christianity has proclaimed the gospel in heaven, on earth, and even to the spirits in Hades—the world of the dead.

With the help of the martyrs, Jesus created the holy city New Jerusalem, which is Shincheonji Church of Jesus. Today, at the time of the second coming, the unification of spirit and flesh occurs at the new heaven and new earth—Shincheonji (Rv 21:1-3). The creation of Shincheonji is the creation of a new nation of God and a new generation. We are called Shincheonji Church of Jesus (abbreviated Shincheonji or SCJ) because God, Jesus, and the spirits of the martyrs are here with us. Our name is not man-made; it was promised in the Bible. Shincheonji is the new spiritual

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nation of God, re-created after its preceding generation came to an end (Rv 6). The many churches and theological seminaries of this world go by many names. All of them, however, are names given by men; they are not names promised by God. Therefore, it must be made clear that our name, Shincheonji Church of Jesus, means we are a new Christian church that encompasses both the spiritual world and the physical world, those who are living and those who are dead.

Anyone who truly believes in the Bible, which is God's word, will acknowledge Shincheonji and come looking for it. As he promised in Rv 21, God descends upon and dwells with the new heaven and new earth (i.e., Shincheonji). Believing in the physical fulfillment that appears according to the promised word is the only way to prove one's belief in God and his prophecies. Those who refuse to believe in the physical fulfillment simply prove that they are not true believers. Jesus made the prophecies so that his followers would be able to see and believe in the fulfillment when it appears (Jn 14:29).

The faith of those who claim to believe in the prophecies of the Bible without believing in their physical fulfillment is futile, just like the faith of the people of Physical Israel at the time of the first coming. The twelve tribes of Shincheonji were promised by God and have been created according to that promise in the physical world today. If you are a Christian who believes in the Bible, you have been eagerly looking forward to the fulfillment of Revelation and the rest of the New Testament. True Christians have placed

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all their hope in the fulfillment of Revelation. Anyone who wants to argue that Shincheonji has not been fulfilled according to the book of Revelation should give precise reasons using the Bible. We, the people of Shincheonji, are certain of the way in which we have fulfilled and are fulfilling the book of Revelation.

Only those who believe in the physical fulfillment of the prophecies at Shincheonji Church of Jesus—Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony—are truly blessed. They will reign forever.

50. Old Testament and New Testament prophecies and their fulfillment

God's fulfillment of his promises to Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus

When God prophesies about future events he always fulfills his prophecies (Is 14:24; Jn 14:29, 19:30; Rv 21:6). He has fulfilled everything exactly as he promised from the time of Adam in Genesis to the time of Revelation. He accomplished through Moses the words he prophesied to Abraham (Gn 2:24-25, 12:40-41). He accomplished through Jesus the things he prophesied through the Old Testament prophets (Jn 19:30). Moreover, he comes to Shincheonji today and accomplishes the words he prophesied in the New Testament through Jesus and the promised pastor who overcomes (Rv 21:1-7).

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The prophecies of the Old Testament and their fulfillment

Both Adam, the first pastor chosen by God, and his wife Eve were deceived by the serpent. They were expelled from the garden of Eden because they broke God's command and sinned by eating the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

God prophesied that the serpent and the woman, along with their descendents, would become enemies (Gn 3:15). This prophecy was fulfilled both at Jesus' first coming (Mt 23) and today (Rv 12), which is the time of the second coming.

Noah, who was born nine generations after Adam, had three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth. Ham's son Canaan was cursed to become a slave of his brothers' slaves because of Ham's sin (Gn 9:25-27).

Afterward, God appeared to Abraham, who was born nine generations after Shem, and prophesied about what would happen to Abraham's descendents (Gn 15:13-21). God later fulfilled his promise to Abraham through Jacob, Moses, and Joshua (Gn 46:1-7; Ex 3:1-10; Jo 24). After this, the descendants of Abraham (himself a descendant of Shem) conquered the land of Canaan—the land of Ham's descendants—and made them the slaves of their slaves.

Later, however, the great nation and people of Israel were divided in two (north and south) because of the idolatry of Solomon, son of David. This is when God prophesied about the future through the prophets of the Old Testament. According to these prophecies, God sent his son Jesus Christ, and through him, God fulfilled the entire Old Testament (Jn 19:30).

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The prophecies of the New Testament and their fulfillment

Jesus, who fulfilled the Old Testament, promised many things about future events. These promises are the prophecies of the New Testament. It has been approximately 2,000 years since the prophecies were made, and Jesus is fulfilling them today. Just as it was at the time of the first coming, however, today's pastors are so caught up in their own thoughts that they simply cannot believe in either God's prophecies or their physical fulfillment. Truly, the first have become last and the last have become first (Mt 19:30, 20:16). Some people believe only to later deny their faith and leave, others leave but later return, and others come and are thrown out. Just as in the time of Adam and the time of Jesus, at the time of the second coming, the people of God's tabernacle are thrown out and many come from the east and west to take their places at the feast (Mt 8:11-12).

Today, which is the time of the second coming, God fulfills everything from Rv 1 to Rv 20:1-6.[10] God will also fulfill Rv 20:7-15 1,000 years later. God will reign forever, both during and after the millennium.

Today, after defeating the devil in battle, God is gathering his true believers from the north, south, east, and west. God's nation is being established on earth as it is in heaven, and God will hold a wedding banquet where the unification of spirit and flesh will

10 – Revelation 21-22 repeats the events of what was accomplished from Rv 1-20. With the exception of Rv 21:8, all of Rv 21 expands on Rv 20:1-6. Revelation 21:8 refers to the same thing as Rv 20:7-15.

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take place. Blessed is the one who is invited to this feast and chosen (Mt 22:14). These are the people who become the 144,000 people of the twelve tribes of the nation of New Spiritual Israel. They are God's kingdom and priests who will reign forever. After this is accomplished, the great multitude dressed in white gather to become the people of God's kingdom.

According to the Bible, the authority to rule over the nations, the food of eternal life, and heaven are all given to the one who overcomes (Rv 2-3). It is thus, critical that the one who overcomes appears for the fulfillment to take place. The fact that the prophecies mention the people who come from the north, south, east, and west to participate in the wedding banquet of heaven (Mt 8:11; Lk 13:29) means these people must appear to fulfill the prophecies. The Bible says there will be wars at the time of the end (Mt 24:3-15), so there must be wars. It says there will be a harvest (Mt 13:30, 37-40), so someone must harvest. At this time of harvest, those who are saved by believing in the promises are the people who are harvested.

What are the promises of the New Testament we must keep?

The events of the end of the age for the world of Christianity are occurring today. The prophecies of both the Gospels and Revelation promise the same events. At the end of the age, there will be a person who gives food at the proper time (Rv 10; Mt 24:45-47). He receives the food of eternal life, the stone with which to judge, and the iron scepter to rule all nations. God, Jesus, and heaven descend on him and he sits with Jesus on Jesus' throne (Rv 2-3).

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This man hears the angels explain the physical fulfillment of the entire book of Revelation (Rv 22:8), and he proclaims to his congregation members what he sees and hears (Rv 1:2, 22:16). This time of the end also includes the work of harvesting people from the north, south, east, and west (Rv 14), the work of inviting guests for the wedding banquet (Mt 22:1-14), and the work of those guests actually coming and participating in the banquet of heaven (Rv 19). In the time of the first coming, the Pharisees and scribes invaded the organization of heaven led by John the Baptist. In the time of the second coming, a similar event takes place. The seven messengers (lamps), who prepare the way, appear at the tabernacle of the seven golden lampstands. Soon, however, Satan's Nicolaitans enter the tabernacle of heaven and deceive God's people into eating food sacrificed to idols (i.e., the teachings of false pastors) and into committing adultery (Rv 2-3).

After the two witnesses who serve the Lord receive the book from heaven and after they testify about betrayal and destruction, they are killed by a pastor who belongs to the beast (Rv 11). The New Testament prophecies include the secret of the seven stars, the secret of the seventh trumpet, and the secret of the prostitute riding the beast with seven heads and ten horns (Rv 1:20, 10:7, 17:7). They also include the seven seals, the sounding of the seven trumpets, and the plagues of the seven bowls (Rv 6, 8-11, 16-18). In Revelation's first battle, the nation of God is conquered by the beast (Rv 13), but in the second battle the nation of Satan is conquered by the one who overcomes (Rv 12). In the end times, very few people receive

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the seal of God, but Satan seals nearly the entire world. The whole world is deceived by and belongs to Satan (Rv 18). In Rv 16:12-16, the evil spirits come out of the false prophets and gather the pastors of the world for the battle against the people of God. In Rv 20:7-9, Satan's troops surround the city of God's people, the city God loves.

Today, false pastors claim to be orthodox because they have been appointed through ecclesiastical authority that has been passed down for generations within their denominations (Babylon). The congregation members of these false pastors falsely accuse and persecute the people who are sealed by God as a cult. Shincheonji, which has been created today, is the nation of God and the people of heaven. The people persecuting Shincheonji as a cult are themselves the true heretics. They are the troops of Satan promised in the Bible. All of this war and distress will take place in the end times, and therefore, believers must distinguish what is true and what is false. We must all recognize, understand, and believe the truth. Christians who understand the prophecies of the Bible will believe in Shincheonji, but those who believe only in the traditions of men that have been passed down for generations will believe in the lies of Shincheonji's enemies.

The first sign of the Lord's return and of the end of the age is the distress that appears when the corrupt and aging generation of Spiritual Israel is being destroyed. This destruction is carried out by a group that invades God's tabernacle and stands in the holy place. Although the pastor of the tabernacle and his congregation—likened unto the sun, moon, and stars—began with the holy

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spirit, they end by returning to the flesh. When this happens—in the midst of this distress—all nations become the kingdom of Satan (Rv 18:2-3). These are all prophecies about the end of the age.

Most Christians are not concerned with the events Jesus promised to occur at the end of the age. They are under the delusion they will be saved just by calling out "Lord, Lord," and by offering service and devotion. True believers, on the other hand, will understand that the prophecies of the New Testament will be fulfilled according to the Bible. To be saved at that time, they must seek the one who overcomes—the promised pastor. They must also prepare the lamp and the oil (Mt 25:1-13). If they fail to adequately prepare, they will be destroyed just like people in the times of Noah and Lot (Lk 17:26-30).

Those who believe in the words of the prophecies and their physical fulfillment—those who become new creations by being born again of the water and the holy spirit (Jn 3:5)—become a part of God's chosen people (i.e., the priests and people of God's kingdom). I pray you will seek and find; I pray that you will knock (Mt 7:7-8) so you too can enter the hope of heaven. Amen.

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51. A summary of God's promises and their fulfillment

God's promise with Abraham and its fulfillment

God fulfilled the promise he made with Abraham (Gn 15) through Moses and Joshua. (Please refer to the books of Exodus and Joshua.) God sent Jacob's son Joseph to Egypt and then gave Pharaoh a dream (vision) about seven years of abundance and seven years of famine. With God's help Joseph was able to explain to Pharaoh the meaning of his dream about an ensuing famine. Later, because of the famine, Jacob's family traveled to Egypt to buy food for his family. When Jacob arrived he met Joseph, who had since become the prime minister of Egypt. Jacob's family settled in Egypt, and for four generations they were fruitful and increased in number. When the time came for God to fulfill the promise he made with Abraham, God led Abraham's descendants out of Egypt through Moses and into Canaan through Joshua. This was how the covenant God made with Abraham was fulfilled.

The Old Testament promises and their fulfillment

The prophecies God made through the Old Testament prophets were all fulfilled through God's son Jesus (Jn 19:30). God sent John the Baptist as the messenger who prepared the way before the virgin Mary gave birth to Jesus in Bethlehem. According to the Old Testament prophecies, Jesus spent his childhood in Egypt, was

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raised in Nazareth, and started his ministry in the gentile region of Galilee when he reached the age of 30. Jesus brought the era of Physical Israel to an end, chose twelve disciples, and through them he created Spiritual Israel. He sowed the seed of the gospel, prophesied what would be fulfilled in the future, established the new covenant, bore the cross, and gave up his life to atone for the sins of humanity. Afterward, he resurrected and taught the disciples for 40 days before ascending to heaven. God fulfilled everything he prophesied in the Old Testament through Jesus over a span of just three years.

The New Testament promises and their fulfillment

Jesus, who fulfilled the Old Testament, made prophecies about future events in the New Testament. Among others places in the New Testament, Mt 24 and the entire book of Revelation are well-known as prophecies about the second coming. The prophecies of the New Testament are all fulfilled at the time of the second coming through the messenger who prepares the way and the messenger of the covenant. Stated simply, the prophecies of Revelation describe two battles between God and Satan. When the pastor who belongs to Satan wins, he takes control of all God's possessions. When the pastor who belongs to God wins, however, he judges Satan's world, brings it to an end, and creates the twelve tribes of God's kingdom.

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52. The conclusion of the New Testament

The conclusion of the four gospels

The four gospels are books, which testify that Jesus is the son sent by God and that he is the Christ. When the prophecies of Malachi were fulfilled, the world was ready for the work of Jesus at the first coming. Malachi prophesied that the messenger of the covenant would come to the temple of the messenger who prepares the way (Mal 3:1-2) and that the prophet Elijah would come before the great and dreadful day of the Lord (Mal 4:5). When Malachi prophesied about Elijah and this messenger that prepares the way, he was referring figuratively to the same person—John the Baptist. John the Baptist came in the spirit and power of Elijah, and he also worked as a lamp that prepared the way for Jesus (Lk 1:17; Jn 5:35).

After John the Baptist's work came to an end and he was imprisoned, Jesus began his full-time ministry of preaching the gospel. The three years of Jesus' work that are recorded in the four gospels can be summarized in three ways.

First, at the time of John the Baptist, Jesus created the kingdom of Spiritual Israel before bringing an end to the kingdom of Physical Israel. Physical Israel had survived to that point through the blood of Abraham (Mt 11:13-14). In other words, Jesus judged and brought an end to the previous world before sowing the good seed and creating a new kingdom through the sons of heaven (Mt 13:18-43).

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Second, Jesus prophesied he would come again for the harvest (Mt 13:30) and that he would send the advocate, the holy spirit of truth (Jn 14-16).

Third, Jesus died on the cross to atone for the sins of humanity, he resurrected, and then he ascended to heaven (Mt 20:17-19; Mt 27, 28:1-10; Acts 1:9-11).

The conclusion of Revelation

Revelation is a book of prophecy written by Apostle John regarding the events that will occur at the time of the second coming. John had a vision of the future and recorded it as the book of Revelation. Revelation begins with Jesus choosing seven pastors to act as messengers that prepare the way (Rv 1:9-20). These seven pastors are symbolized by seven stars in Rv 1:20. Just as John the Baptist worked as the messenger who prepared the way for Jesus at the time of the first coming, these seven messengers, who act as lamps, prepare the way for the work of Jesus in the time of the second coming.

The church of the seven golden lampstands where the seven messengers carry out their work is invaded and destroyed by the Nicolaitans, who are also referred to as the beast with seven heads and ten horns that belongs to Satan (Rv 13). Revelation 6 and Rv 21 describe this same event as the passing away of the first heaven and first earth. Since the church of the seven golden lampstands was established as a representative church in the last days of Spiritual

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Israel (i.e., the Christian world), its destruction signifies the destruction of all of Spiritual Israel.

At that time, the woman clothed with the sun, moon, and stars gives birth to a son. This child, along with his brothers, fights against the group of the dragon and overcomes it by the blood of the Lamb and the word of his testimony. Because he overcomes, the male child is granted the authority to rule over all nations. These overcomers (i.e., the child and his brothers) become the kingdom of New Spiritual Israel and create the twelve tribes by sealing people with the names of God and Jesus. According to Rv 21:1, this newly established kingdom is called the new heaven and new earth—Shincheonji.

The kingdom of heaven in the spiritual world, the holy city New Jerusalem, descends upon the new heaven and new earth (i.e., Shincheonji). The souls of those who were killed while spreading God's word and the testimony about Jesus, along with those who refused to worship the beast and his image or to receive his mark, will come and reign together with Christ in Shincheonji, the city of the millennium (Rv 20:4-6, NASB). When God and his tabernacle unite with the people of Shincheonji, there will be no more death, mourning, crying, or pain; everything is renewed (Rv 21:2-7). This is how God finishes the work he started at the time of Adam's betrayal and how God enters his rest. This is also when the spirits and flesh who worked with God also enter into rest.

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The physical fulfillment of the events prophesied in the New Testament

Most of Jesus' prophecies are recorded in the four gospels of the New Testament and also in Revelation. Among them, the time has come for Jesus' prophecies about the end of the age to be fulfilled. Approximately 2,000 years after the prophecies were made, their fulfillment began at the base of Cheonggye Mountain, which is located in Gwacheon, Republic of Korea. Today, with just a few remaining exceptions, the prophecies of the New Testament have been fulfilled. Since the harvest is not yet finished, the sealing of the 144,000 people of the twelve tribes is still taking place (Rv 7:1-8). After this sealing is complete, the great multitude dressed in white will also come according to prophecy (Rv 7:9-14). Without belonging to the twelve tribes of New Spiritual Israel, which are created through the work of harvesting today, no one can be saved to become one of God's people (Rv 14:17-20, 22:15).

During the time of the Old Testament, only those born of the bloodline of Adam, Noah, and Abraham knew and believed in God. This meant that God's work was only carried out within their world. After Jesus came to the earth, however, the seed of the gospel was sown all around the world. This is why God's work of harvesting takes place all throughout the world. This work of harvesting, however, is centered around the location of the pastor promised in Revelation. That location is Shincheonji Church of Jesus—The Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony—which is located in Gwacheon, Republic of Korea.

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Just as Jesus promised in the New Testament, he comes like a thief in the night and orders his angels to harvest. The angels choose believers and use them as sharp sickles for the harvest. The angels go with their sickle-like believers to the place Jesus' seed was sown, which is the world of the Christian church. Once there, they harvest those who are awake (1 Thes 5:2-6; Rv 14:14-16).

At the time of the first coming, although Jesus revealed he was the son of God promised in the Old Testament, the religious leaders of that time killed him to maintain control of their congregations or vineyards (Mt 21:33-39). Jesus knew quite well that the pastors of every generation act this way because of their vested interests in maintaining their authority. This is why he promised to come like a thief in the night at the end of the age. In fulfillment of this promise, the angels work quietly to harvest believers to Shincheonji, which is the promised kingdom of God.

Shincheonji and its mission education centers have been created according to the New Testament prophecy in Mt 6:10, "May your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Instructors at Shincheonji's mission centers teach the prophecies of the Bible and their fulfillment free of charge in an organized way that answers the questions of who, what, when, where, why, and how. When describing the physical fulfillment of the prophecies, however, they avoid mentioning the actual names of churches and their people to protect against potential defamation of character. Figurative names of people and locations in the Bible are used instead of revealing their true identities. To join Shincheonji, people

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must not only understand the prophecies of the New Testament, they must also confirm and believe in the truth of the physical fulfillment of those prophecies. They must be born again by the water and the spirit, they must be sealed by the word, and their names must be written in the book of life.

Before Revelation was fulfilled and the sealed book was opened, all pastors and all Christians taught and learned only the teachings of men. Once the book sealed with seven seals was taken from God's right hand and opened by Jesus, however, the angels sounded the trumpets to proclaim the events of betrayal and destruction. This was also the time when the seven bowls were poured out to judge the betrayers and destroyers. It is the sounding of the seventh and final trumpet that proclaims the good news of salvation.

Isaiah 18:3 says, "All you who live in the world, who reside on the earth, you will see a signal flag raised on the mountains; you will hear a trumpet being blown." When they hear the sound of this trumpet, all Christians should gather to the place of salvation (Mt. Zion, Shincheonji). This trumpet sound testifies to the fulfillment of the prophecies.

The prophecies of the New Testament are already being fulfilled. At first, the destroyers in the prophecies of Revelation defeated the betrayers in a spiritual battle, but the savior (i.e., the promised pastor who overcomes) has defeated these destroyers in a second battle (Rv 13, 12). Jesus promised in Rv 2-3 to give many things to the one who overcomes at the time of the end. The kingdom

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of heaven in the spiritual world has descended upon the one who overcomes here in the physical world and is working through him.

Today, because the promises in the New Testament, including the prophecies of Revelation, are being fulfilled, I am testifying about the fulfillment of the prophecies according to what I have seen and heard. Blessed are those who verify the physical fulfillment of the prophecies for themselves. Blessed are those who believe in and keep the physical fulfillment. Those who are sealed by God and come to Shincheonji, the place of salvation, will become God's kingdom and priests and will reign together with him forever. Amen.

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Epilogue

This book, *The Creation of Heaven and Earth*, summarizes the most important parts of the Bible from Gn 1:1 to Rv 22:21 (the Alpha and the Omega). I am testifying the contents of this book through work of the holy spirit. God, the creator, promised to create the heavens and the earth in Gn 1, and he accomplishes this work roughly 6,000 years later in Rv 21.

Today, the Lord of heaven and earth has brought to an end the preceding corrupt generation and has created the promised new heaven and new earth, the world of Shincheonji (Rv 21:1-6). Because God is restoring all his creation back to its original state of purity, he is finally accomplishing the work he began when Adam sinned. This is the meaning of the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. Just as he did in the times of Abraham and Moses, just as he did in the time of the Old Testament and the time of the first coming, God promised in the New Testament what he would fulfill in the future. Today, God has fulfilled his prophecies (Is 14:24; Jn 14:29, 19:30; Rv 21:6). God fulfilled what he prophesied to Abraham in the time of Moses; God fulfilled what he prophesied to the Old Testament prophets at the time of Jesus' first coming. What was prophesied in the New Testament is being fulfilled today in Shincheonji through Jesus and the one who overcomes (the promised pastor). Just as God summarized 6,000 years of history in one book, the Bible, I have summarized the entire Bible in this book, *The Creation of Heaven and Earth*.

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The prophecies of the Bible directly affect those living at the time of their fulfillment. Because the prophecies are given in advance so that people can believe in their fulfillment when it appears, the prophecies become the evidence that allows people to verify the truth of the physical fulfillment. This is why Christians must know the prophecies of the Bible and await their physical fulfillment. When the prophecies are fulfilled, believers can then use the prophecies to verify and believe in the physical fulfillment. According to the Bible, those who fail to keep the words of the prophecies when they are fulfilled will be cursed. Christians who do not even know the prophecies cannot wait for the time of their fulfillment, nor can they believe in the physical fulfillment even if they see it. If they cannot believe in the fulfillment, how can they keep the words of the prophecies? Simply put, anyone who does not believe in the prophecies and their fulfillment does not believe in God.

Revelation acts as the conclusion of the entire Bible and of God's entire work of re-creation. The prophecies of Revelation, however, have been sealed with seven seals for approximately 2,000 years since Apostle John received and recorded his vision. Today, the time that was appointed for Revelation's fulfillment has finally come. Jesus opened the seals of the closed book and gave it to the one who overcomes, the true promised pastor. Jesus commanded him to testify about the words recorded in the scroll to all nations, peoples, languages, and kings. Anyone who believes in this promised testimony and obeys it is harvested to become a part of God's

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kingdom and priests. These people will participate in the first resurrection, which allows them to reign with Christ for 1,000 years. This is similar to how God delivered his people out of Egypt through Moses according to the promise God made to Abraham. It is also similar to the way in which God worked through Jesus, whom he promised in the Old Testament, to deliver his people from slavery under the Pharisees and teachers of the law (i.e. the serpents of Satan). Today, believers are being delivered from slavery under the spiritual kingdom of Babylon, which has conquered all nations. This is the path to salvation that was promised in the New Testament prophecies (Rv 17:14, 18:4).

This message is for all Christian brothers and sisters who believe in Jesus! Let us not become like the people of the past who refused to believe in God's covenant. Let us obey the words of the new covenant so that we can receive forgiveness for our sins and become a part of the twelve tribes of Shincheonji—the new and everlasting kingdom that God creates at the end of the age. This was God's objective for us throughout the Bible; it is the quickest way to heaven and eternal life. Anyone who hears the testimony about the fulfillment of the New Testament prophecies and refuses to believe it will be destroyed, just like the people in the time of Adam and Lot (Lk 17:26-30).

Revelation 2 and 3 reveal that the holy spirit is with the one who overcomes, that heaven descends upon the one who overcomes, and that the one who overcomes receives the food that leads to eternal life. Without a heart that believes the truth or even seeks to

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know the truth, how can a person be considered a believer in the Bible? I have testified that the New Testament has been fulfilled. Rather than persecuting others, Christians should sincerely try to find out whether my testimony is true. Anyone who decides to believe will be able to reach salvation. It is likely, however, that most people living today at the time of the second coming, when the New Testament prophecies are fulfilled, will become like the Israelites at the time of the first coming. Although Jesus came according to the Old Testament prophecies, because they refused to believe in Jesus, they did not receive salvation. It is my sincere prayer that people will verify again and again the fulfillment of the prophecies, believe in that fulfillment, and thus receive salvation. Amen.

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THE CREATION OF HEAVEN AND EARTH

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All scripture quotations are taken from the NET Bible unless otherwise noted. Every mention of the Korean Bible refers specifically to the Korean Revised Version.

Korean Version

Printed:	July 25, 2007
Published:	July 30, 2007

English Version

2nd edition:	April 23, 2014
Printed:	March 1, 2009
Published:	March 8, 2009
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Layout:	Walton Jones
Cover design:	Seiyoung Noah
Publisher:	Shincheonji Press
Registration:	November 25, 1999 (No. 36)
Address:	Jeil Shopping, 4th floor, Byeolyang-dong Gwacheon-shi Gyeonggi-do, Republic of Korea
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I Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star! 17 And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let the one who hears say: "Come!" And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wants it take the water of life free of charge. (Rv 22:16-17)

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